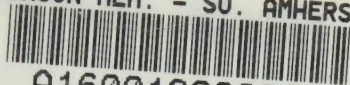




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FATHER *of his* COUNTRY

How the Boy Washington
Grew in Stature and Spirit
and Became a Great Soldier
and President

by
William E. Barton

Author of
The GREAT GOOD MAN

THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY

What sort of boy was George Washington? We are all familiar with the story of how he chopped down his father's cherry tree, how he threw a silver dollar across the Potomac, and how he tamed his mother's horse. But Dr. Barton has many more stories of this young Virginian who became our first president and who could have been the first American king, if he had so desired.

We find him an awkward, large-boned youth, fond of outdoor life, a good athlete, a daring horseman, whose education, though meager, was well-suited to the needs of his time.

At twenty-two, with his first military commission, he led an expedition against the French and won his first victory. Dr. Barton tells an absorbing story of Washington's experiences in the French and Indian wars, in the Revolutionary War and as President, and gives us a vivid charming picture of his years at Mt. Vernon. It is a human, personal story, which is also an impartial and authentic history.


Dr. Barton brings us into personal contact with George Washington; there are quotations from his diary and letters, extracts from his account books, that make him as real as our own fathers and brothers.

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THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY

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THE GREAT GOOD MAN

The Life of Abraham Lincoln
for American Youth

By WILLIAM E. BARTON

Illustrated by Raymond H. Warren

The
Father of His Country

How the Boy Washington Grew in
Stature and Spirit and Became a Great
Soldier and President

By
WILLIAM E. BARTON

Author of
THE GREAT GOOD MAN, THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN, ETC.

Illustrated by
H. A. OGDEN

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THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY

The Father of His Country

CHAPTER I

WASHINGTON'S BOYHOOD

1732-1738

ALL great nations are proud nations. Greece held her head high in the age of Pericles. Rome in the days of her power believed that to be a Roman citizen was higher honor than to be a king in any other country. The nations that have builded our civilization have been strong, and have gloried in their strength. Rudyard Kipling reminded Great Britain that the pomp of all governments that vaunted themselves in ancient times was "one with Nineveh and Tyre," and he warned his own country, lest it forget, to avoid—

"Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the law."

But his reference to other peoples as lesser breeds and Gentiles was in itself a boast. No one of us would desire to live in a country whose people were not proud of it. Our own country, quite as

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much as Britain, has need of the warning to avoid foolish boasting; but it is not without qualities of which its people may be humbly proud.

We ought, however, to be proud of the right things. Our country has grown with great rapidity, and has profited by the development of vast agricultural and mineral resources. It is natural that American communities should look with satisfaction on the rapid conquest of the wilderness, and the increase of commerce and manufacture in this relatively new land. Conditions in other nations less favored in these particulars have made it possible for this country to accumulate large wealth. It is not to be pretended that these are facts to be ignored, or to be thought about without some measure of satisfaction. But we shall not estimate ourselves and our country at our best if we think only, or even chiefly, of these things, or if we imagine that these alone can make us a great nation.

We are a nation without a name; for the "United States" is hardly a name, and other people on this hemisphere have equal right with us to claim to live in America. Yet, for lack of other name, we call ourselves Americans. While our title to that term is not undisputed, we can not wholly help ourselves. We can scarcely call ourselves "United Staters," and if we did, ours are not the only United States. As we have inherited a

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name larger than of right belongs to us, we are under more than usual obligation to make that name honorable.

Whatever pride this or any nation may possess in the breadth of its territory, the extent of its manufacture, the volume of its commerce and the efficiency of its means of transportation, its substantial and abiding satisfactions must be in the character of its people and the nobility of its leaders. The material wealth of a nation is based upon the fertility of its soil, the richness of its mines, the convenience of its roads, the depth and security of its harbors and the products of its workshops. But these are not and never can be a substitute for great men. Greatness is not synonymous with largeness. A thing is not necessarily great because it is big, nor big because it is near. A nation must incarnate its principles in the lives of its people, and especially in the character of its leaders. If it fails to do this, it will grow sterile and will decay. It will die for lack of ideals and worthy aspirations.

America does not lack for names of men and women of whom its young people may be justly proud. It is not enough for our needs that the biographies of these national heroes and heroines should have been written and printed and placed upon shelves with other books. Every generation needs to be told again, in the language and

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thought of its own time, the life story of its leaders. Styles change in books as surely as in dress. New facts are discovered by the patient toil of scholars, and new books must be written in the light of all known truth, new and old. But, more than all, the lives of great men take on new significance when seen in perspective. In one of Walter Scott's novels, the hero, for whom the book is named, "Old Mortality," goes from one cemetery to another with hammer and chisel, carving a little deeper in the perishable stone the names of the Scotch Covenanters. Something of this character the biographers of every generation need to do for a nation possessed of great men. But the material on which the biographers work, and the place where they carve the names to deeper depth, is not the stone of the graveyard; it is in the mind and affection of the youth where these names are to be freshly written. Thus do we perpetuate the memory of the heroes of olden days.

It is now almost two hundred years since George Washington was born, and his life story has been told many times. The first biographies were written within a few months of his death. Three or four of them appeared in the year 1800. Of these only one is now remembered, and that chiefly as a literary curiosity. We shall have occasion to mention it later, and to quote its most famous story. It was a book of greater merit than is some-

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times recognized, but it will not suffice for our present needs. Following these first books, all of them small and none of them complete or satisfactory, came other and more pretentious books, which attempted to exalt George Washington almost above any possible human level. They were welcomed, for that generation honored George Washington so much that no praise of him seemed too extravagant for the taste of the people. These volumes have been followed in more recent years by other books, more scholarly, and, in some respects, more trustworthy, but some of these, in their recoil from the excessive praise of earlier biographers, have been cold, and unsympathetic, and even cynical.

The story of George Washington should be told truthfully, but with reverence. We measure his stature by the shadow which he casts across two centuries, and we are sure that he was no pigmy. We shall do well to study his life with respect. We shall not succeed in exalting ourselves by flip-pant mirth about him, nor should we go too far in our reaction from too much hero-worship on the part of our fathers. If we were to attempt this, our fathers would have been more nearly right than we, for they did not render themselves incapable of appreciating greatness. But we need go to neither extreme.

Thomas Carlyle was quite right when he said,

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“No sadder proof can be given by a man of his own littleness than his disbelief in great men.” Not only the men who write the books that seek to belittle greatness, but those who, reading them, rejoice in the effort to diminish the honor due to the heroes of human history, proclaim their own incapacity for greatness. On the other hand, when we recognize the elements of real heroism in those men who have displayed it, we waken within ourselves the heroic qualities that lie potent within us. George Washington was a truly great man, but his greatness was not of a sort that we are unable to imitate. As his faults were like our faults, we can, if we will, make virtues like his our own. That is one good reason why we should read truthful biography. Life is our great teacher, and character is learned from character.

George Washington was a thoroughly human boy and man. He loved sports more than he loved books, but he did not neglect books. He had faults, and we know what they were and shall not strive to conceal them, but we shall not suppose that he possessed no other qualities than his faults. Nor when we tell of his faults shall we gloat over them, nor suppose them to be the most important part of our discovery. We want to know George Washington, his faults and his virtues, his frolics and his serious purposes, his commonplace daily life, and the times when he displayed true greatness.

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Above all, we want to know what qualities were in that big country boy that eventually made him a hero. We want to know about his adventures, his fights, his studies, and all that will help us to understand him.

We learn lessons from other lives more than we learn from abstract principles. Life teaches us how to live. When we discover nobleness in other lives, it helps us to be noble. When we learn about the lives of men who grew up from boyhood and had to struggle and learn and face danger, we are helped in our own struggles to learn and to conquer. We light our torches at the funeral pyres of the great who have lived before us, and the spirits of the mighty dead still rule us from their urns.

It is a recognition of these truths that brings us to a new study of the life of our first great military leader, the first President of the American Republic. He was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," George Washington, the Father of his Country.

George Washington was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia, February 11, Old Style, or, as we now compute it, February 22, 1732. In his earlier years, he celebrated his birthday on the eleventh, but by the time Lawrence Lewis and Nellie Custis were married, and chose as the date of their wedding the birthday of Washington, he

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had accepted the change, and the festivities in celebration of their wedding and his anniversary were combined on the twenty-second. But while Washington himself accepted the change from the Old Style to the New Style, Alexandria, which annually observed the day, held to the eleventh. It is an interesting fact that his birthday, as Washington reckoned it during the greater part of his life, and that of Abraham Lincoln, were only one day apart. Lincoln was sixty-seven years younger than Washington, and was born a trifle more than nine years after Washington died. The death of Washington occurred December 14, 1799, when he was not quite sixty-eight years old. Lincoln died at fifty-six.

The homestead of the Washingtons is called by several names, and this fact gives rise to some confusion. Washington himself called the place Bridges Creek, or, at times, Westmoreland. The boundary of the Washington farm on the eastern side was Pope's Creek, and this name was sometimes used, though not by Washington himself. Bridges Creek flowed through the middle of the Washington lands. The locality is now quite commonly called "Wakefield." There is no town of that name in the vicinity, and the name "Wakefield" appears to have been selected after the death of Augustine Washington, George's father, and to have been taken from one of the English estates

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of the Washington family. Whatever name is used, Bridges Creek, Westmoreland, Pope's Creek or Wakefield, the same place is intended.

The Potomac River flowed past the door of the house where Washington was born, and at that point it is very wide. All the creeks flowing through or close by the Washington plantation, emptied into that wide stream. The lad could look out of the front door and see water stretching afar, and when he looked out of the back door, he faced the unbroken forest. What was called the plantation was mostly woods. Only a little space about the house was cleared, and a few small fields near at hand gave room through which to obtain other views of a dense forest. During the little time that he lived in that spot he probably never went very far away from the house, for the water was in front, the wilderness was in the rear, and he was a tiny child.

The house where George Washington was born was burned many years ago. It is described as a rather large Virginia farmhouse, with four main rooms on the ground floor, and an outside chimney at each end. A stately granite monument stands in what was the dooryard, but whether it marks the site of the home or of one of the outbuildings, is not definitely known. We have no photographs of the home, but a drawing made from early descriptions appears to be reasonably correct.

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George Washington was the son of Augustine Washington by his second wife, Mary Ball. Augustine's first wife was named Jane Butler. George was of the fourth generation of Washingtons in America, and the family had lived in Virginia about three-quarters of a century at the time of his birth. His was not of the very oldest of Virginia families, but its beginning was far enough back to make George, by courtesy, a descendant of what were known as "the first families." The English line has been traced, with reasonable certainty, for some five or six generations farther back.

The first name of which we appear to be certain is that of John Washington of Whitfield, in Lancashire, England. John Washington lived in the fifteenth century, and he had a son John. This second John had another son of the same name. Following these three Johns came Lawrence Washington.

On the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, Lawrence Washington received a parcel of the priory of St. Andrew, the Manor of Sulgrave. The Sulgrave home of the Washingtons still stands, and is one of the shrines of American visitors in England. It is about seventy-five miles northwest of London. In the Wars of the Roses the Washingtons are supposed to have fought on the side of the house of Lancaster. Certain property which they rented free, either for love, or in

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recognition of service, carried an obligation to pay as rental annually, if requested, a red rose in the time of roses.

Lawrence Washington died in 1584. Following him came his son Robert. Robert had a son Lawrence, who became the father of eight sons without a single intervening daughter, and then came, in unbroken succession, eight daughters. Two of his sons, William and John, were knighted, and another, Lawrence, born about 1602, entered Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1619, and was graduated in 1623. He, Lawrence, a clergyman, had a living in Purleigh, Essex County, in 1632, in which year he married Amphilis Rhodes. In 1643 he was ejected from his living by authority of Cromwell. It is interesting to know that in the very same year in which the Puritans of England were ejecting Reverend Lawrence Washington, the Established Church in Virginia succeeded in passing a law expelling all the Puritans from that state. Reverend Lawrence Washington died in 1652, and his wife, Amphilis, died two years later.

The Washington line in America begins with the Reverend Lawrence Washington's son John, who migrated to Virginia about 1658. He was first mate of a ship whose captain was Edward Prescott, and John Washington was to have shared equally with Captain Prescott in the profits of the voyage. Prescott appears to have been a dishonest

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and cruel man. John Washington sued him in Maryland, had him arrested and bound over under penalty of forty thousand pounds of tobacco, that product being the legal money in Virginia. John Washington charged not only that he had been wronged by Prescott, but that Prescott on the voyage had hanged an old woman on a charge of witchcraft. No witches have ever been burned in the United States, but witchcraft was believed in at that time in New England and in the colonies farther south, and a number of witches were hanged in different colonies. There was one pathetic and terrible outbreak of the delusion in Massachusetts, as a result of which nineteen people were hanged, and one was killed by compression. Witches were hanged in various European countries long after the last legal execution for witchcraft in America. Two more witches were hanged on shipboard in the jurisdiction of Virginia. One of these was the old woman whom Prescott put to death. It is much to the credit of John Washington that he protested and prosecuted Prescott for this crime.

A curious incident is on record concerning the embezzling case. When it first came to trial, John Washington begged to be excused from making the long journey from Westmoreland County to Maryland. He had married his second wife; her name was Ann Pope, daughter of the Lieutenant-

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Governor. John Washington gave as the reason why he could not well be present at the first date set for the trial:

“God willing, I intend to get my young sonne baptized. All ye company and Gossips being already invited.”

So he stayed for the baptism of this “young sonne,” who was named for his reverend grandfather, Lawrence Washington. There are so many Johns and so many Lawrences among the Washingtons, that it is easy to get them mixed, and not very important to keep them apart in memory, but the list as here given is correct.

In 1661, John Washington became a vestryman in the church; a little later he became colonel of militia and was active in wars against the Indians. He also was elected a member of the House of Burgesses, the Virginia Colonial Legislature. He was three times married, and died about 1677, leaving two sons and a daughter.

By this time the Washingtons were a well landed family. Their possessions had increased, and they had broad acres, indentured servants and a number of slaves. Colonel John Washington's eldest son has been already named. Lawrence Washington, grandfather of George, was born on Bridges Creek and left two sons, John and Augustine. Their father died while they were still young, and

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the widow married again and took the children to England. There she died, and there her sons were educated. Her second son, Augustine, who was born in 1694, spent his youth in England, but returned to Virginia. He married Jane Butler, and they became the parents of two sons, Lawrence and Augustine. Jane Butler Washington died in 1728. Two years later her husband married Mary Ball, who became the mother of four sons and two daughters. The eldest of these four sons of Augustine and Mary Washington was George Washington. Of Mary Ball Washington there will be occasion to speak later in the narrative. Her education was limited, but she was a woman of force and character.

CHAPTER II

THE LITTLE HATCHET

1738

It is necessary at this point to consider the stories that have come down to us of George Washington's childhood, particularly one of them which has become the occasion of so much mirth that some courage is required to make use of it at all, yet which has too large a place in our national tradition for us to omit.

One of the earliest of Washington's biographers, though not, as is usually supposed, the first of them, was Rev. Mason Locke Weems, who sometimes conducted services at Pohick Church, near Mount Vernon, where Washington at times attended service. He was a friend of Washington and of the Lees, and his wife was a relative of some relatives of the Washingtons. His first book about Washington, published less than three months after Washington's death, contained only an account of his military and political life, but after this little volume had run through five editions, Weems rewrote and enlarged it, and in this more extended form he told a number of stories,

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some of which he had obtained from the Lees, and others from an elderly woman who was a member of the Washington family and had lived for some time with Washington's mother. It is not likely that any of these stories lost anything in the telling, and we are quite sure that Mr. Weems was capable of giving them whatever touches and embellishments he considered fitting. But there is no good reason to believe that he invented them. He probably obtained the stories in the way he describes.

Mr. Weems was an unconventional minister in the Episcopal Church. He played the fiddle and he peddled books, and was a jolly companion. But his moral character was not denied nor did those who knew him regard him as a liar. Recent biographers have treated him unfairly. He was not a scholarly historian, but he was a man who deserves better treatment than he has been receiving. Weems related in his *Life of Washington*, that George's father, in order to teach him that there is a Creator, and that things do not occur by chance, planted cabbage seed in lines that he marked with a stick so that when the little plants sprang up they spelled the name GEORGE WASHINGTON. A story of a similar sort had been published in an English book the year before Mr. Weems issued his first edition, and whether he read the story there and borrowed it, or whether two differ-

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ent fathers used the same method of instruction, we do not know. Critics have been swift to accuse Mr. Weems of taking over the story of another father and son, and applying it to George Washington and his father. That may be true, but we can not be sure. He told another story, however, which has become so famous that it must be told in Mr. Weems' own words:

“The following anecdote” [says Parson Weems] “is a case in point. It is too valuable to be lost, and too true to be doubted; for it was communicated to me by the same excellent lady to whom I am indebted for the last. ‘When George,’ said she, ‘was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet, of which, like most little boys, he was immoderately fond; and was constantly going about chopping everything that came in his way. One day, in the garden, where he often amused himself hacking his mother’s peasticks, he unluckily tried the edge of his hatchet on the body of a beautiful young English cherry tree, which he barked so terribly that I don’t believe the tree ever got the better of it. The next morning the old gentleman, finding out what had befallen his tree, which, by the bye, was a great favorite, came into the house, and with much warmth asked for the mischievous author, declaring at the same time that he would not have taken five guineas for his tree. Nobody could tell him anything about it. Presently George and his hatchet made their appearance. “George,” said his father, “do you

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know who killed that beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden?" This was a tough question, and George staggered under it for a moment, but quickly recovered himself, and looking at his father with the sweet face of youth, brightened with the inexpressible charm of all-conquering truth, he bravely cried out, "I can't tell a lie, pa; you know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet." "Run to my arms, you dearest boy," cried his father in transports; "run to my arms; glad am I, George, that you killed my tree, for you have paid me for it a thousandfold. Such an act of heroism in my son is more worth than a thousand trees, though blossomed with silver, and their fruits purest gold." " "

Mr. Weems went on to say that it was in this way, by interesting at once both his heart and head, that Mr. Washington "conducted George with great ease and pleasure along the happy paths of virtue." Weems, however, did not relate many stories of Washington's youth. Probably there were not many outstanding incidents. George's life was that of the ordinary Virginia lad and there were no notable events, or at least not many of them, that broke the ordinary round of commonplace vocations.

As every one knows, it has become common in recent years to flout the little hatchet story. Weems has been laughed at as a shameless liar who made this story out of his own imagination. That, how-

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ever, is not at all probable. Weems told this story in his books to people who had known Washington for many years. General Henry Lee wrote a commendation of the book which Weems was not slow to print on the back of the title page. It is scarcely possible that the book would have received the approval it did from people whose knowledge of Washington was close and constant if these stories had been considered ridiculous in that locality.

It goes without saying that George Washington and his father never talked to each other in such stilted language as Parson Weems uses. We know that boys in that period addressed their fathers with much more ceremony than is common now, and that fathers handed down their instructions to their sons from a great height of formal language. Still, Mr. Weems told the story in such language as he thought a father and son ought to use in a book. Making allowance for this—the elaboration of the words employed—as we do when we listen to the dialogue in grand opera, the story is far from being improbable. What we are told is, that George Washington, when a lad, was as mischievous as other boys; he was not a prodigy, nor was he faultless. When he was discovered in a fault he was tempted to lie to avoid punishment, but he bravely told the truth; and his father was wise enough to commend him for his truthfulness instead of punishing him for the wrong that he had done.

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This does not make George Washington a prig as has been so often asserted. It makes him a normal boy, but a brave boy and a truthful boy. It is such a story as would have been likely to be remembered by the elderly woman from whom Weems declared that he obtained it. There was such a woman and she was related by marriage to Mrs. Weems. The strong probability is that, except for its artificial language, the story is essentially true. It is too good a story to be lost. It certifies to us that George Washington, while by no means abnormally good, was remembered by those who knew him in his youth as having been a truthful boy.

Mr. Weems possessed no great literary ability, and those biographers have been very unfair who have ridiculed him for the lack of it. Nor was he a discriminating biographer; there were few such in his day, and his praise of Washington in some places was extravagant. But still he wrote an interesting book, that had human values, and was much better than any of the three books about Washington that had preceded it. For that matter, it was better than many that followed. We do not need to defend his preposterous language, but we should at least be fair to him. He wrote biographies also of Benjamin Franklin, of Francis Marion and William Penn. He preserved some of the most interesting narratives of the Revolutionary

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period. It was his *Life of Washington* that Abraham Lincoln read and loved. He did not think it ridiculous, and discriminating scholars find in it much to commend, in spite of its extravagances. It is not well for us to approach any study of this character in a spirit of cynical mockery. We can afford to be fair.

But while we seek to be fair to Parson Weems, and not to cast aside with the stilted language of his narrative the truth, as far as we can discover it in his narrative, we can not be content with his book as our own interpretation of Washington. We are glad to have this little incident of Washington's youth, for we have very few stories of his earlier years. His childhood was not eventful. He lived as other boys lived in Virginia in his day, and there was not very much that could be told about him in books about his youth. We must judge of those early years in part by what we know of conditions of the time, and in part by what we discover in Washington in the years that followed.

CHAPTER III

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S EDUCATION

1738-1747

WHEN George Washington was about three years of age, his father moved to Little Hunting Creek on the Potomac, and was elected a vestryman in Truro Parish. The father made a journey to England in the autumn of 1736 and was gone until the following June. The house on Little Hunting Creek was burned in 1740, as we learn from a letter from a Mr. Yates to Augustine Washington. From this letter we judge that George, who at this time was eight years of age, had a dangerous experience, for the letter congratulates Mr. Washington on his son's escape from the fire. By this single scrap of evidence we are informed that in some way the little boy was in especial peril. Who saved his life, and how it was done, we shall never know.

Leaving the ashes of their recent home behind them, the Washingtons moved to what is known as the "River Farm." It was situated on the north side of the Rappahannock, nearly opposite Fredericksburg. This was the real home of George

WASHINGTON'S EDUCATION

Washington's boyhood, though the period of residence on Little Hunting Creek was longer than has been supposed. George Washington can not have remembered much of the plantation at Bridges Creek, except for his later residence there in the home of his brother. This was the house in which George had been born, but his memories of it were later ones.

As long as George Washington's father lived, George received his instruction at home. His mother, while not wholly illiterate, had very little education and could not help him much. His father died April 12, 1743, when George was eleven years old. The father was forty-nine at the time of his death.

At the River Farm George grew strong and tall, and it is said to have been while he was still living there as a lad that he threw a silver dollar across the Rappahannock River. We are entitled to doubt this story. Although the Washingtons were not a poverty-stricken family, silver dollars were far too scarce to be used in any such fashion. He may possibly have thrown a stone across, but even that would have been a feat almost incredible for a boy, and not easy for a man. The fact that the same story is told of his throwing a dollar across the Potomac does not add to the probability of its truthfulness.

While George was living near Fredericksburg,

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he first went to school, his teacher being a sexton named Hobby. It did not take the lad a great while to exhaust the educational resources of Mr. Hobby, and George went back to his birthplace where his half-brother, Lawrence, fourteen years older than himself, had taken his bride, Anne Fairfax, and was living in the old home at Bridges Creek. There George went to school to the Reverend Mr. Williams, his second school-teacher, and about his last.

It was often said in the later years of Washington's life and just after his death, that Mr. Williams had taught him Latin. It was no other than the Reverend Mr. Weems who disputed this. He declared that Mr. Williams did not teach George Latin because he knew no more of it than Balaam's ass, and that George himself never learned Latin. George did, however, learn arithmetic and the rudiments of surveying. He was very proud of his early proficiency as a surveyor and draftsman. One of his early surveys was of his brother's turnip field and was made on February 27, 1748, when George was sixteen. He platted it with great care and ornamented his drawing with pride and skill. His survey is still preserved and shows the task neatly done.

Mr. Weems tells us that when George Washington left school, the other boys were all in tears because he had endeared himself to them by his

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ability and fine character. We need not take that statement too seriously, and yet they probably were sorry to have him leave. He was a manly boy and there is no reason known to us why he should not have been popular among his young schoolmates.

Two other stories deserve to be told about the youth of George Washington. For both of them we are indebted to Mr. Weems. One of these Weems received from the Lee family. It is that Washington, while still a lad, subdued a very wild colt which other and older horsemen had been unable to break. The story as the Lee family handed it down, and as Parson Weems embellished it, is doubtless exaggerated. George Washington was a skilful horseman, however, and it is not surprising to know that even in his youth he was able to manage horses which others found beyond their control.

The other story also comes from the Lee family and is to the effect that Washington as a boy was eager to go to sea, but that he yielded to the importunity of his mother and did not go. This story finds interesting confirmation in a letter from Joseph Ball to his sister, Washington's mother. Writing from England on May 19, 1747, when George was fifteen years of age, he speaks of George's desire for the seafaring life, and tells his sister that she might better apprentice her son

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to a tinker. He told her that a common sailor before the mast had very little liberty, received small wages, and had not much chance for promotion. He strongly advised his sister not to let George go. It is not surprising that, influenced by such a letter and by his mother's desire to have him near, George Washington gave up his ambition to be a sailor.

It need not surprise us that Mary Washington received this letter from her brother in London. The journey across the ocean, while a long one, was one which many people in Virginia made in those times.

The education of that period called for a liberal use of copy-books. This exercise not only taught the pupil to write a good hand, which Washington did then and ever after, but gave him good advice in the precepts which he had to write over and over again. He did not, however, confine himself to the copies assigned. He dabbled in poetry of his own composition, and it was about as good poetry as other boys of his age were capable of making. He did not blot his copy-books, but he ornamented the margins with pen-drawn pictures of birds and faces of men and women and boys and girls.

Ruled paper was not then in use in Virginia. Washington came to use a sheet of heavy paper with broad lines that he himself had ruled with a pen. These lines showed through the sheet on

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which he wrote, and enabled him to make his written lines straight.

He had an important book called *The Young Man's Companion*, telling how to set out trees, how to measure land and lumber, how to compute interest, how to make ink and how to be a gentleman. It was a useful book, and he used it constantly.

When George Washington started out in life he had really a meager education. Of literature he knew little. He never became a very good speller, but he was capable of expressing his thought clearly, and he wrote an excellent and painstaking hand. He excelled in arithmetic and in such branches of mathematics as he was able to pursue. His proficiency in numbers and dimensions became the basis of that profession with which he began his public career.

He did not have what we would call a liberal education, but he was educated beyond the average Virginia boy of his generation. Indeed, he had as much learning as most of the landed and wealthy young men of that time. He did not know Latin or Greek, and in all his later association with the French, he never seemed to care to learn their language. But he had a practical education of a sort that fitted well the needs of his life and time, and he made the most of it.

George Washington's mother continued to live

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on the farm across from Fredericksburg, the same farm where George had chopped the cherry tree. Whether that tree lived and grew we do not know, but his mother is said to have favored the peach tree for domestic purposes. A bundle of peach switches is declared to have been kept constantly at hand, and we have no reason to doubt that George Washington gave her occasion to use them now and then. He was a vigorous and noisy boy, and she was an exacting and faultfinding mother. She was greatly afraid of lightning and afraid of accidents that might occur to her son. Her abnormal timidity must have been greatly disturbed by George's daredevil courage. George was not much under her influence after he entered his teens.

From his early boyhood, he was fond of soldierly pursuits. He was manly and courteous, there was nothing about him to suggest either the genius or the saint, but he was a good, honorable and worthy boy.

A further word should be said about the mother of George Washington. She is represented as having been a flaxen-haired beauty in her youth, and to have carried her look of distinction into her mature years. She had no considerable education, and the story that she had once traveled to London where her brother lived does not appear to be true. She was a woman of strength of character, but

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was left a widow with a heavy load of responsibility, and she did not always bear her burdens cheerfully. She appears to have had an uncertain temper and an unhappy disposition. Her son George appears to have had frequent occasion for impatience with her. But she was a faithful mother, and her judgment about the wisdom of George's going to sea was sound, even if she was not wholly unselfish in it. It is good to believe that her wishes had weight with George, and we are very glad that he did not become a sailor. We do not like to think what might have happened if he had disregarded his mother's wishes in that particular. His adventures on the ocean might have cost his country dear in the years that came afterward.

This chapter on Washington's education must not end without particular reference to a document that has come down to us in Washington's own handwriting, being his "Rules of Civility." He is supposed to have written this code of behavior when he was thirteen years of age. This is beyond any question the most important document we have that bears upon the character of Washington's early instruction.

These "rules" were long supposed to have been composed by Washington himself in his boyhood, but that is far from having been the case. They were copy-book maxims, and are known to have

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been in existence long before Washington was born. No boy of thirteen composed them, though many boys may be presumed to have copied them. They are of very great interest, not only because they represent part of what all well-instructed boys in Washington's day were expected to know and to follow, but because they had their place in his education, and we may believe that he sought to observe and obey them. They are stiff and formal, and they touch on some matters of relatively little importance, but they must have had large value to boys like Washington, and we are not certain but that something like a code of such rules would not be of value now. As Washington learned to write them, and perhaps commit them to memory, they numbered one hundred and ten. We need not quote them all. The following are about half the whole number:

Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present.

In the presence of others sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

Sleep not when others speak, sit not when others stand, speak not when you should hold your peace, walk not when others stop.

Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk on which another reads or writes; lean not on any one.

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Be no flatterer; neither play with any one that delights not to be played with.

Read no letters, books, or papers in company; but when there is a necessity for doing it, you must ask leave. Come not near the books or writings of any one so as to read them, unless desired, nor give your opinion of them unasked; also, look not nigh when another is writing a letter.

Let your countenance be pleasant, but in serious matters somewhat grave.

Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy.

When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop and retire, especially if it be at a door or any strait place, to give way for him to pass.

They that are in dignity, or in office, have in all places precedency; but whilst they are young they ought to respect those that are their equals in birth or other qualities, though they have no public charge.

It is good manners to prefer them to whom we speak before ourselves, especially if they be above us, with whom in no sort we ought to begin.

Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician if you be not knowing therein.

In writing, or speaking, give to every person his due title, according to his degree and the custom of the place.

Strive not with your superiors in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.

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Undertake not to teach your equal in the art himself professes: it savors of arrogancy.

When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it.

Being to advise, or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, presently or at some other time, and in what terms to do it; and in reproving show no signs of choler, but do it with sweetness and mildness.

Take all admonitions thankfully, in what time or place soever given; but afterwards, not being culpable, take a time and place convenient to let him know it that gave them.

Mock not, nor jest at anything of importance; break no jests that are sharp-biting, and if you deliver anything witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing thereat yourself.

Wherein you reprove another be unblamable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precepts.

Use no reproachful language against any one, neither curse nor revile.

Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any.

In your apparel be modest, and endeavor to accommodate nature, rather than to procure admiration; keep to the fashion of your equals, such as are civil and orderly with respect to times and places.

Play not the peacock, looking everywhere about you to see if you be well decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and clothes handsomely.

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Associate yourself with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation, for it is better to be alone than in bad company.

Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature; and in all causes of passion, admit reason to govern.

Be not immodest in urging your friend to discover a secret.

Utter not base and frivolous things amongst grave and learned men; nor very difficult questions or subjects among the ignorant; nor things hard to be believed.

Speak not of doleful things in time of mirth, nor at the table; speak not of melancholy things, as death, and wounds, and if others mention them, change, if you can, the discourse. Tell not your dreams, but to your intimate friend.

Break not a jest where none takes pleasure in mirth; laugh not aloud, nor at all without occasion. Deride no man's misfortune, though there seem to be some cause.

Speak not injurious words, neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none although they give occasion.

Be not forward, but friendly and courteous; the first to salute, hear, and answer; and be not pensive when it is a time to converse.

Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending.

Go not thither where you know not whether you shall be welcome or not. Give not advice without being asked, and when desired, do it briefly.

If two contend together, take not the part of

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either unconstrained, and be not obstinate in your own opinion; in things indifferent be of the major side.

Reprehend not the imperfections of others, for that belongs to parents, masters, and superiors.

Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others, and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.

Speak not in an unknown tongue in company, but in your own language, and that as those of quality do and not as the vulgar; sublime matters treat seriously.

Think before you speak; pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.

When another speaks be attentive yourself, and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not, nor prompt him without being desired; interrupt him not, nor answer him, till his speech be ended.

Treat with men at fit times about business: and whisper not in the company of others.

Make no comparisons, and if any of the company be commended for any brave act of virtue, commend not another for the same.

Be not apt to relate news if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard, name not your author always. A secret discover not.

Be not curious to know the affairs of others, neither approach to those that speak in private.

Undertake not what you can not perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

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When you deliver a matter, do it without passion and with discretion, however mean the person be you do it to.

When your superiors talk to anybody, hearken not, neither speak, nor laugh.

In disputes be not so desirous to overcome as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion, and submit to the judgment of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute.

Be not tedious in discourse; make not many digressions, nor repeat often the same manner of discourse.

Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust.

Make no show of taking great delight in your victuals; feed not with greediness; cut your bread with a knife; lean not on the table; neither find fault with what you eat.

Be not angry at table, whatever happens, and if you have reason to be so, show it not; put on a cheerful countenance, especially if there be strangers, for good humor makes one dish of meat a feast.

Set not yourself at the upper end of the table; but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, lest you should trouble the company.

When you speak of God or his attributes, let it be seriously in reverence. Honor and obey your natural parents, although they be poor.

Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.

Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.

CHAPTER IV

SURVEYOR AND EXPLORER

1748-1750

SOME time after his marriage to Anne Fairfax, daughter of William Fairfax, Lawrence Washington removed farther up the Potomac to a plantation where he was a near neighbor of the Fairfax family. His admiration for Admiral Vernon led him to name the new home Mount Vernon. That is not the only name we possess that harks back to this same old sea-dog. His mixture of rum and water for his sailors acquired a name which he shared, and he was called "Old Grog." From him is said to be named the silk with the corded texture known as "grosgrain." Just how that name came from grog may not be plain, nor is it very important.

In his brother's new home at Mount Vernon, George had further opportunity for study. Lawrence continued to instruct him somewhat, and it is quite certain that George did learn a very little Latin. This he may have obtained in Fredericksburg, after his sojourn at Bridges Creek, and before his removal to Mount Vernon. His teacher

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for this little time is said to have been Reverend James Marye, but of his labor with Washington we know practically nothing. There is a volume of Patrick's Latin translation of Homer, which was published in 1742, and which bears on its fly-leaf in Washington's schoolboy hand a Latin inscription certifying to his ownership of the book and the authenticity of his signature. But he did not learn much Latin nor remember it long.

In his brother's home in Mount Vernon he was in close relationship with the Fairfax family, who lived four miles away on an estate named Belvoir. William Fairfax, the father of Lawrence Washington's wife Anne, was father also of a son. George William Fairfax was seven years older than George Washington, which was just half the space of time that separated George from his brother Lawrence. George William, who was often called William, and thus easily confused with his father, became George Washington's lifelong friend, and his associate in the art of surveying.

George William Fairfax had a relative who seemed like an uncle, Thomas Lord Fairfax, who had inherited through his grandfather, Lord Culpeper, enormous estates in Virginia. The kings of England had been very willing to give to their favorites large grants of land in the New World, and the more ignorant they were of the extent and value of the land, the more generous they were.

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The grant which Lord Fairfax inherited was the "Northern Neck." A glance at the map of Virginia will show that its eastern portion is made up of a series of peninsulas formed by the flow of its rivers into Chesapeake Bay. The northernmost of these peninsulas or necks lay between the Rappahannock and the Potomac. The neck swelled as the land extended back to the head waters of these two streams, and made a tract of five million four hundred thousand acres, an area as large as the state of New Jersey.

Lord Fairfax had at first no expectation of coming to America, and sent his cousin, the elder William Fairfax, as his agent. Later, having been disappointed in love, as it is said, Lord Fairfax himself crossed over to view his estates, and lived and died in Virginia.

His plan was not to deed this land to absolute owners, but to lease it in perpetuity to lifelong tenants, and to receive each year a small rental. He expected in this way to become the richest man in the colonies. But he wanted to learn, if he could, something of the boundaries of his domain.

Lord Fairfax became George Washington's warm and faithful friend. Mrs. Washington appreciated Lord Fairfax's fondness for her son, which soon became apparent, and she is said to have asked his advice about sending George to England to pursue his studies. His lordship's letter in reply,

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if it be genuine, not only shows a sincere interest in George, but is also our best picture of the young fellow as he was at this time:

“Honoured Madam:

“You are so good as to ask what I think of a temporary residence for your son George in England. It is a country for which I myself have no inclination, and the gentlemen you mention are certainly renowned gamblers and rakes, which I should be sorry your son were exposed to, even if his means easily admitted of a residence in England. He is strong and hardy, and as good a master of a horse as any one could desire. His education might have been bettered, but what he has is accurate, and inclines him to much life out of doors. He is very grave for one of his age, and reserved in his intercourse; not a great talker at any time. His mind appears to me to act slowly, but, on the whole, to reach just conclusions, and he has an ardent wish to see the right of questions—what my friend Mr. Addison was pleased to call ‘the intellectual conscience.’ Method and exactness seem to be natural to George. He is, I suspect, beginning to feel the sap rising, being in the spring of life, and is getting ready to be the prey of your sex, wherefore may the Lord help him, and deliver him from the nets those spiders, called women, will cast for his ruin. I presume him to be truthful, because he is exact. I wish I could say that he governs his temper. He is subject to attacks of anger on provocation, and sometimes without just cause; but as he is a reasonable person, time will

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cure him of this vice of nature, and, in fact, he is, in my judgment, a man who will go to school all his life, and profit thereby. I hope, madam, that you will find pleasure in what I have written, and will rest assured that I shall continue to interest myself in his fortunes.

“Much honoured by your appeal to my judgment, I am, my dear madam, your obedient humble servant,

“FAIRFAX.

“To Mrs. Mary Washington.”

Lord Fairfax had abundant opportunity to observe George Washington. With Belvoir (commonly pronounced “Beaver”) within a half-hour’s ride of Mount Vernon, George was often where Lord Fairfax could observe him, sometimes for days or weeks at a time. George rode to hounds, became wise in all matters of agriculture, and displayed qualities of courage and truth which gave promise of success. At the age of sixteen he was over six feet tall; he had very large hands and feet, eyes that were sometimes described as gray and at other times spoken of as blue, and reddish brown hair.

George William Fairfax married in 1749, Sarah, or Sally, eldest daughter of Colonel Wilson Cary. She and her sister Mary became Washington’s warm friends. George Washington’s first great adventure grew out of this relationship to Lord Fairfax. On March 11, 1748, when George was

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sixteen, he and George William Fairfax started on their first surveying expedition. With them was an experienced surveyor, James Genn.

They rode up the Potomac, across the Shenandoah Valley, and along the river to the mouth of Patterson's Creek. They swam their horses across this stream, March twenty-fifth, and themselves crossed in a canoe. They ascended this creek about fifteen miles, to a point a little below where Burlington, West Virginia, now is.

George recorded some interesting details of this journey, including this one, of a house they slept in soon after their surveying began:

MARCH 15, *Tuesday*. "we got our Suppers & Lighted into a Room & I not being so good a Woodsman as ye rest of my Company striped myself very orderly & went into ye Bed as they call it when to my Surprize I found it to be nothing but a Little Straw—Matted together without Sheets or anything else but only one thread Bear blanket with double its weight of Vermin such as Lice, Fleas &c I was glad to get up (as soon as ye Light was carried from us) I put on my Cloths & Lay as my Companions. Had we not been very tired I am sure we should not have slep'd much that night."

This is his record of the next day:

MARCH 16, *Wednesday*. "We set out early & finish'd about one o'Clock & then Travell'd up to

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Frederick Town where our Baggage came to us we cleaned ourselves (to get Rid of y. Game we had caught y. Night before) & took a review of y. Town & thence return'd to our Lodgings."

Seldom were their lodgings luxurious, and as a rule their best nights were the ones in which they slept elsewhere than in houses.

On this journey they saw one rattlesnake, and they met one party of Indians. George thus described them:

MARCH 23, *Wednesday*. "Rain'd till about two oClock and Clear'd when we were agreeably surpris'd at y. sight of thirty odd Indians coming from War with only one Scalp We had some Liquor with us of which we gave them Part it elevating there Spirits put them in y. Humour of Dauncing of whom we had a War Daunce there manner of Dauncing is as follows Viz They clear a Large Circle and make a Great Fire in y. middle they seats themselves around it y. Speaker makes a grand speech telling them in what Manner they are to Daunce after he has finished y. best Dauncer jumps up as one awaked out of a Sleep and runs and Jumps about y. Ring in a most comical Manner he is followed by y. Rest then begins there Musicians to play ye. Musick is a Pot half [full] of Water with a Deerskin Stretched over it as tight as it can and a goard with some Shott in it to Rattle and a Piece of an horses Tail tied to it to make it look fine y. one keeps Rattling and y.



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other Drumming all y. while y. others is Dauncing."

They slept at first in cabins, but finding that accommodations were not always to be had, and that when they were available they were seldom good, George and his companions decided to sleep in the open, though once at least the wind nearly tore away their tent.

They found squatters on Lord Fairfax's lands, mainly people from Pennsylvania, who had drifted across the river and were making themselves at home. Of them Washington writes:

"Patterson's Creek

"APRIL 4. This morning Mr. Fairfax left me with intent to go down to ye mouth of ye Branch. We did two Lots, and was attended by a great Company of People. Men, Women and Children that attended us through ye woods as we went showing their Antick tricks. I really think they seemed to be as ignorant a set of people as the Indians. They would never speak English but when they speak they speak all Dutch."

The surveyors did not molest these squatters. Lord Fairfax intended to make to such people what he considered generous offers for the use of the land. Washington and his associates met both the Indians and the whites on terms of friendship. It is interesting to know that when this young

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surveyor was setting his compass or dragging his chain along Patterson's Creek he was surveying land that later was to have an important place in the pedigree of another young surveyor, Abraham Lincoln. Toward the end of the Revolutionary War, after the surrender of Cornwallis, when the Fairfax lands were coming regularly into the market, Joseph Hanks, maternal ancestor of Lincoln, came with his family along the Potomac, bought land from one of these same Pennsylvania Germans, and established a home there. Nancy Hanks, mother of Abraham Lincoln, was born in 1783 or 1784 on a farm in the Patterson Creek area, first surveyed in 1748 by George Washington.

For this work George Washington was very liberally paid. He received as he said, from a doubloon to six pistoles a day. A pistole was about three dollars and sixty cents, and a doubloon was about seven dollars and twenty cents.

On this expedition George kept a journal, the original of which is preserved in the Library of Congress. It covers a little more than a month from Friday, March 11, to Wednesday, April 13, 1748, when the party returned home. He kept no journal during the next two seasons, but the surveying occupied portions of three successive years. Washington was becoming thoroughly inured to the wilderness. He loved comfort and even luxury,

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but he was capable of enduring exposure, fatigue, hunger and cold, and even of enjoying the experiences. He kept no other journal, so far as we know, until the autumn of 1751, but we are very fortunate in having his first one, and, as we shall later discover, we have what was probably his second.

Back to Mount Vernon he went after his experiences in the wilderness, and attended to his farming and his fox-hunting and his friendly visits with the Fairfaxes and their friends, the Carlyles. He was still a raw-boned and rather awkward young man, but he was a gentleman, and was so regarded by all his friends, both men and women.

CHAPTER V

HIS ONLY OCEAN VOYAGE

1751-1752

GEORGE WASHINGTON was born only a few yards from salt water, for the Potomac at the mouth of Bridges Creek is a tidal stream. His nearness to the ocean was rather constantly in his boyhood thought. The forest was all but impenetrable, but the sea was an open road. As we know, he thought once of becoming a sailor. We know also that his mother considered the wisdom of sending him to England to school. His whole life was spent close to the seashore. Yet in all his life he took one ocean voyage and only one.

That was in 1751 when George was nineteen years of age. His brother Lawrence was sick. He had tuberculosis, which at that time was believed to be caused by cold weather. Heat was thought to be a remedy, and the hotter the climate the more favorable it was believed to be for the patient. Following the best medical advice they could obtain, the Washingtons decided that Lawrence should go to the Barbadoes, a small island east of the Windward Islands, not far distant from

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the coast of South America. The climate there was believed to be highly favorable to persons in Lawrence Washington's condition of health. As he was too ill to travel alone, his younger brother George accompanied him. They sailed from Virginia, September 28, 1751.

For the second period, George kept a diary, a portion of which he preserved. He made daily record of the weather, and wrote what was almost a log-book of the voyage. Accustomed to close observation, he was careful also of his records.

He tells us through the tattered pages of this journal that the vessel experienced "a disturbed and large Sea which imminently endangered our masts rolling away." As usual, the sailors said it was the worst weather they had ever known; "the seamen seemed disheartened, confessing they never had seen such weather before." They had "a constant succession of hard Winds, Squals or Rain and Calms." There was a day when the ship had to go under reefed sails. It met "a large tumbling Sea running many ways."

Sometimes they caught fish:

"Caught a Dolphin at 8 P. M. a Shark at 11 and one of his pilot fish; the Dolphin and pilot was dressed for Dinner."

Only once, and then on the return trip, did he confess to seasickness:

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“Met with a brisk Trade wind and pretty large Swell which made the Ship rowl much and me very sick.”

The ship was small, and the voyage lasted thirty-seven days. At four o'clock on the morning of November fourth, they were surprised to find that they were within three leagues of land. By their reckoning they should have been one hundred fifty leagues to the westward of the island, if George understood the figures correctly. This seems almost incredible, even with their poor instruments, but they had been at the mercy of contrary winds.

Glad were they to be on shore. They found the island abloom, and they were “perfectly ravished by the beautiful prospects which on every side presented to our view the fields of Cain, Corn, Fruit Trees &c in a delightful green.”

They found their lodgings “extravagantly dear.” We can not wonder. The price was fifteen pounds a month, and laundry and liquor were extra.

There, George Washington, probably for the first time in his life, attended a theater. He saw *The Tragedy of George Barnwell*. It was a new experience to him and he did not venture a judgment of his own. It “was said to be well performed.”

A physician gave Lawrence Washington encouragement. Lawrence believed that he was to recov-

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er. The people of the Barbadoes were friendly. Major Clarke invited the brothers to take breakfast and dinner at his house. Lawrence and George were somewhat reluctant to accept because the Clarke family had smallpox, but the Washingtons did not feel at liberty to decline. So they breakfasted and dined at the Clarke home, and enjoyed its hospitality.

On November seventeenth, George was "strongly attacked with the smallpox." He sent for Doctor Lanathan, who gave him attendance. George recovered, and was able to go out on Thursday, December twelfth.

He carried the scars of that sickness all his life. Parson Weems thought them rather an ornament than a disfigurement. But it is scarcely possible that Washington, still unmarried, and painfully conscious of what he lacked of manly beauty, would have agreed with him. However, so large a proportion of the people of those days were similarly adorned that his pitted features can not have been regarded as repellent.

Lawrence did not improve. It became evident that the heat was not doing him the good that he anticipated. He decided to try the less torrid climate of Bermuda, and wanted Mrs. Washington to meet him there. So he sailed in one ship and George in another. Alas, Lawrence got on no better in Bermuda than he had done in Barbadoes.

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George sailed on the *Industry* on December 22, 1751, and made a homeward voyage of about the same length as the outward sail had been. The *Industry* reached the mouth of the York River, January 26, 1752.

George delivered the letters that Lawrence had sent, asking that his wife, Anne Fairfax Washington, should join him in Bermuda, and that George should accompany her. But they did not go. We are not told the reason, but we can hardly guess wrongly. Before they were ready to start, they must have received tidings that Lawrence was not improving, and that they were to await his return. He came back to Virginia, took to his bed, resigned his position as adjutant-general in the colonial militia, with the reasonable hope that his brother George would succeed him in that position, and died July 26, 1752.

By the will of Lawrence Washington, George became his executor, and the manager of his estate. He was made responsible for an annuity to be paid to his sister-in-law, and was guardian at law of the only child of Lawrence, a little girl. It was further provided that in case of the death of this daughter, George should inherit the estate, subject to a life interest, to be paid annually to Mrs. Lawrence Washington. The responsibilities and obligations of his part of the will George assumed. The little girl did not live long. Mrs. Lawrence

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Washington preferred a different arrangement as to her payments, the installments to be fewer in number and larger in size than the will had stipulated. George consented to this modification of the plan, and faithfully carried out his part of the agreement. In all these matters, he proved both capable and honorable.

CHAPTER VI

A THOUSAND MILES IN THE WILDERNESS

1753-1754

WASHINGTON's adventure as a surveyor gave him a vision of the West which led him to plan wisely and well for his own future and the future of the country. The average gentleman living in Virginia in the time of Washington did not think of the colonies as likely to stretch their domain very far back from tide-water. Washington had gone up the Potomac, in the northern part of what now is West Virginia; his estimate of the value of Harper's Ferry both for its location and its iron ore was so great that he bought for the Government this important location at the meeting of the rivers.

An event was about to occur which would give him a new and wider acquaintance with the land to the west. The English colonies, that stretched from Maine to Georgia, along the Atlantic Coast, lay south of a somewhat smaller domain belonging to the French. The mouth of the St. Lawrence River and the fishing industries adjacent, off Labrador and Newfoundland, as well as the region stretching north of the Great Lakes, belonged to France.

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The French had learned to live among the Indians, as the English rarely did. The Indians were disposed to consider the French as friends and allies. The French had their trading-posts and stations for the purchase of fur west of the colonies of New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The western borders of this territory had never been definitely settled. France claimed the land lying south as well as north of the Great Lakes as belonging to her by right of many early explorations. The charters from the English Crown carried the domain of Great Britain westward to "the great South Sea," that is, the Pacific Ocean, but that was a very vague term to both the English and the French. The time was approaching when the overflow of the French into Canada and of the English into Maryland and the colonies farther south, was certain to bring these two nations into conflict over the ownership of this large and disputed territory.

George Washington had an early love for military life. His brother Lawrence had been a soldier, and it was in an expedition to Carthagenia in Central America against the Spanish that he contracted the germs of tuberculosis from which he died. George was eager to be a soldier, though at the time there was no fighting to be done. In 1752, George visited Williamsburg, at that time the capital of Virginia, and secured his commis-

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sion as adjutant-general of the northern division of that state. George at this time was not quite twenty-one, but he had had experience in the wilderness as a surveyor and was capable of undertaking an important task. That task came sooner than expected. Governor Dinwiddie was one of twenty owners of a half-million acres of land in the Ohio Valley. Lawrence and Augustine Washington were among the stockholders. Dinwiddie had already attempted to send a messenger to the French, warning them to leave the land that in his opinion belonged to the English. He hired a man named William Trent, who was acquainted with the Ohio region, to go west and warn the French settlers to leave, and charged Trent also to deliver a message to the French commander. Trent got as far as Logstown, near the present site of Pittsburgh, and found that the French commander was one hundred and fifty miles farther away. He learned, moreover, that the French were having trouble with the Indians, and he judged it well for the English to leave matters as they were. He therefore returned to Virginia and delivered his report to the governor.

Governor Dinwiddie was not satisfied. He wanted an actual message delivered to the French commander. He believed that George Washington, if he would undertake the mission, would carry it through.

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Washington was more than willing to go on this undertaking. He was familiar with the forest; he had traveled over much of the road; he had courage and love of adventure. Moreover, he had a personal interest of his own, for by the death of his brother Lawrence, he was a stockholder of the company. He rode out of Williamsburg, October 1, 1753, taking with him as interpreter a Dutchman named Van Braam who had taught him fencing lessons and who had a little knowledge of French. Unfortunately, Van Braam did not know as much French as he and Washington thought he did.

They got as far as Wills Creek, Fort Cumberland, which was as far as Washington knew the way. There he engaged a man named Christopher Gist to act as guide. Two traders and two "servitors" accompanied them. It was now the middle of November, and the rains were constant, streams were swollen, and there were many delays, but at length they reached the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers where the Ohio Company had selected a site for a fort.

There they met the Indians, and held a conference with a chief named Tanacharisson, who was known as the "Half-King," a curious title given him because he and his tribe were subjects of the Six Nations or Iroquois. The Half-King complained of the conduct of the French, and was

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willing to go on with Washington to visit the French commander. He told Washington that the French general had said to him that the Indians did not own the land. The Half-King quoted him as saying:

“Child, you talk foolish. You say this land belongs to you; there is not the black of my nails yours.”

Even as finger-nails were then kept in the wilderness, no great amount of land was available there for the Indians, and the Half-King was disposed to think kindly of the friendship of his brother, the governor of Virginia, who also did not admit the wicked claims of the French. It is to be feared, however, that the governor of Virginia kept his nails as free from land for the Indians as did the French.

The Half-King and two other Indians accompanied Washington as he went farther into the wilderness to where Franklin, Pennsylvania, now is, a place only thirty miles south of the shore of Lake Erie.

There they waited for what seemed to the impatient Washington a long time, conferring with the Indians and with the French captain, Joincaire, a half-breed, son of a French soldier and an Indian squaw.

From Venango, as the settlement was then called, to Fort Le Bœuf, now Waterford, near

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Erie, proved to be a four days' journey through mud and swollen streams. At Fort Le Bœuf the journey found its destination. Washington had traveled more than five hundred miles in forty-one days, in weather and by perilous trails almost the worst that the year could have provided.

There Washington was fortunate in finding the French commander, an elderly, one-eyed man, Legardeur de St. Pierre. That officer had himself returned but recently from a long expedition. He had wanted to discover how large was the domain which belonged, as he believed, to the French king. Learning from the Indians that the plain extended very far, and was bounded toward the setting of the sun by high mountains, St. Pierre had explored the wilderness about one-third the way across the northern part of the state of Ohio; but he did not discover the Rocky Mountains, and so he had returned and was home in time to meet Washington.

It was fortunate for St. Pierre that he did not continue on his journey to the Rocky Mountains, for he would almost certainly have died before reaching them, and his march shows how little the white people knew about the size of this continent.

St. Pierre received Washington courteously, and knowing no more of English than Washington did of French, sent for a relative of his to translate the letter of Governor Dinwiddie. What the letter said in English was that:

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“The lands upon the River Ohio in the Western Parts of the Colony of Virginia are so notoriously known to be the property of the Crown of Great Britain, that it is a Matter of equal Concern and Surprise for me to hear that a Body of French forces are erecting Fortresses and making Settlements upon that River within his Majesty’s dominions. It becomes my duty to require your peaceable departure.”

St. Pierre made courteous but equally firm reply:

“I shall transmit your letter to the Marquis Duquesne. His answer will be a Law to me. As for the Summons you send me to retire, I do not think myself obliged to obey it. Whatever may be your instruction, I am here by orders of my General; and I entreat you, sir, not to doubt for one Moment, but that I am determined to conform myself to them with all the Exactness and Resolution which can be expected from the best officer.”

The answer of the French commander was as direct and emphatic as military duty could have required, but the language was still that of official civility. To Washington personally his courtesy was marked. Washington insisted on prompt return, but there was delay. The French officer sent him a plentiful supply of provisions and of liquor, but Washington knew that the French were stealing away from him the loyalty of the Half-

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King, and that the French were determined to hold their ground, and would not lack for assistance from the Indians. He was eager to get back. His Indian friends were being furnished with liquor and presents, and were growing less and less dependable. "I can't say that ever in my Life I suffered so much anxiety as I did in this affair," he wrote. "I saw that every strategem which the most fruitful Brain could invent was practised to win the Half-King to their Interest."

The Half-King grew less and less compliant with Washington's requests. And now it was discovered that the horses on which Washington and his party had come, and which were naturally much fatigued by the journey, had not improved their condition during the delay. Washington was a horseman, and not accustomed to long walks. But he determined to make the way back to Virginia on foot.

He left Van Braam, his interpreter, with the horses and baggage, with instructions to follow when conditions grew more favorable. He took his papers, including the reply of St. Pierre, and started back. He put off his uniform, and, as he said, "tied myself up in a match-coat." That was a coat of matched skins, sewed together into a garment. "Then with Gun in Hand and Pack at my Back, I set out with Mr. Gist fitted in the the same manner."

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Gist did not wholly approve of this venture. It seemed to him that Washington was more courageous than prudent. Like Washington, he kept a diary, and he wrote:

“I was unwilling he should undertake such a travel, who had never been used to walking before this time. But he insisted on it and so we set out with our packs, like Indians, and traveled eighteen miles. That night, the Major was much fatigued.”

Undoubtedly! Eighteen miles through woods and streams and wintry weather, and with a heavy pack and a gun, was a hard first day's tramp for the young major.

On the second day at a place called the “Murdering-town” one of the Indians who had been with them for a part of the journey fired at Washington and Gist at a distance of fifteen paces, but fortunately missed them. Washington suspected that his act was prompted by treachery on the part of the French, but apparently the plot was that of the Indians, or possibly of a single Indian. He saw an opportunity to waylay two white men and obtain their scalps under conditions that would involve little or no risk to the murderer. Only one Indian fired; there were no others in sight. But it seemed to Washington that others must be near and involved in the conspiracy, and that perhaps the French were not far away. It

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was a terrifying experience. Washington and Gist rushed upon the Indian before he had time to load his gun, and so far as he was concerned, they had no immediate ground for fear. But they could not know how many Indians were hard behind pursuing them, nor yet how many lay in ambush ahead. The two young white men were alone in the heart of the wilderness. An attack had been made upon them with deadly intent. If they were not frightened, it would indeed have been strange. Washington wrote:

“We took this fellow into custody, and kept him till about 9 o'clock at Night; then let him go, and walked all the remaining Part of the Night to be out of the Reach of their Pursuit.”

It is safe to say that some men would have shot him, but Washington, while capable of stern work when he thought it necessary, preferred the dangerous and wearisome long night walk at the end of the second hard day's march.

Indeed, Gist thought that their own safety required them to kill the savage who had so nearly succeeded in murdering one of them. “I would have killed him,” wrote Gist, “but the major would not suffer me to kill him.”

They did not stop for rest that night nor yet on the following day. They came to the Allegheny River, which they expected to find frozen across,

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Instead, it was filled with cakes of floating ice. Washington tells how they met this emergency, for they had more than one good reason for wanting to get this stream behind them, and they desired, if possible, to put it between themselves and any possible pursuers:

“There was no Way for getting over but on a Raft; which we set about with one poor Hatchet, and finished soon after Sun-setting.”

It was well for Washington that he had learned to use the hatchet. He and Gist must have had hard work completing their raft before night, and how weary they must have been we can imagine, for this was their third day. Having launched their unwieldy craft, Washington goes on:

“But before we were Half Way over, we were jammed in the Ice, in such a Manner that we expected every Moment our Raft to sink, and ourselves to Parish. I put out my Setting Pole to try to stop the Raft, that the Ice might pass by, when the Rapidity of the Stream threw it with so much Violence against the Pole that it jerked me into ten Feet of Water; but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the Raft Logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts we could not get the Raft to either Shore; but we were obliged, as we were near an Island, to quit our Raft and make to it.

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“The cold was so extremely severe, that Mr. Gist had all his Fingers and some of his Toes frozen; but the water was shut up so hard, that we found no Difficulty in Getting off the Island, on the Ice, in the Morning.”

There they found shelter in the house of a Mr. Frazier, and they must have needed rest and treatment for their frost-bitten fingers and toes, but Washington writes not of these discomforts, but of his effort to obtain horses that they might continue their journey with better speed.

An Indian queen lived where now McKeesport stands, and Washington was informed that she had not been pleased at his having passed her on his outward journey. So he made her a present of “a Matchcoat and a Bottle of Rum, which latter was thought much the best Present of the two.”

Leaving this dusky forest princess doubly warmed by his two presents, and having secured two horses, Washington set forth again. Mounted now, and for a time accompanied by Gist, he made all possible speed back to civilization. When they had reached a region safe from pursuit from Indians, Gist went to his own home, and Washington rode the remainder of the way alone. He reached Belvoir, home of the Fairfaxes, and there remained for one day of welcome rest. Then he mounted again, and rode to Williamsburg. He had left that capital on October 1, 1753, and he returned to

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it on January 16, 1754. He had traveled a thousand miles, in rigorous winter weather, and had endured great peril and hardship. It may be presumed that at Belvoir he secured some clothing more presentable than his shabby match-cloth garments, and he soon stood before Governor Dinwiddie.

That official was most appreciative. He had sent forth one messenger who had failed to deliver the letter and brought him no definite reply. George Washington had hunted till he found the French commander, and had delivered the governor's missive and brought back an answer which left no reasonable doubt as to the intentions of the French. Those intentions were precisely what Governor Dinwiddie had expected. His judgment was confirmed, and his faith in Washington was justified.

Not yet was Washington permitted to rest. The governor wanted George to write out his report, not only for the House of Burgesses, but also in order that it might be sent to London, and there was but one day before the ship would sail.

Perhaps that was Washington's hardest day's work in connection with this journey, but he went at it resolutely and his report was ready for the ship.

The report arrived in London, in the form of a journal, being indeed that which we have been



Reporting to Governor Dinwiddie, Williamsburg, Virginia

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quoting from time to time in this chapter. Even in London it was seen to be a document of importance. It showed that the French intended to dispute the British claim to possession of territory which their Majesties, the several sovereigns of Great Britain, had granted to their American colonies. This was ominous news.

We have no present occasion, nor had George Washington, to discuss the question whose was the better claim to the western territory, that of the English or of the French. He, of course, believed that the English had the right of the contention; and as any question on that score was settled long ago, we need not raise it now. All that we need do is to record that George Washington, twenty-one years of age, undertook a difficult and dangerous adventure, in which one brave man had failed, and that, through many dangers and much hardship, he did faithfully what he was sent out to do.

And strangely and unexpectedly, the name of George Washington became a familiar one in London, where it was soon forgotten, but was recalled somewhat vividly a number of years later.

CHAPTER VII

WASHINGTON THE LOVER

NO ACCOUNT of the youth of George Washington should fail to relate that he was an early and an ardent lover. His first recorded experiments in love are undated, but must have occurred in his early teens, a number of years before the events in the last two chapters. While he was still a schoolboy he toiled painfully at an acrostic in honor of Frances Alexander and got three-quarters of the way through it. Just by way of seeing how he succeeded in the writing of verse that of necessity was artificial in form, it may be worth while to quote this literary effort, reading down the first letter of the lines that we may be sure about the girl whose name he undertook to immortalize in the initials of his acrostic:

“From your bright sparkling Eyes I was undone;
Rays, you have; more transparent than ye sun;
Amidst its glory in ye Rising Day,
None can you equal in your bright array.
Constant in your calm, unspoiled mind,
Equal toe all, but will toe none Prove kind;
So knowing, seldom one so Young you’l find.

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“Ah! woe’s me, that I should love and conceal;
Long have I wished, but never dare reveal,
Even though severely Love’s Pains I feel.
Xerxes the great, wasn’t free from Cupid’s Dart,
And all the greatest Heroes felt the smart.”

He needed four lines more, beginning in succession with the letters N, D, E and R. Apparently he had trouble fitting them into his scheme, and in finding sentiments to fill them. Perhaps George William Fairfax came along about that time and invited him to a fox-hunt. Or perhaps it was Mary Cary, the sister of William Fairfax’s wife, who kept him from finishing the poem. We know nothing about Frances Alexander, and it is to be feared that she never knew how George Washington was breaking his very youthful heart over her supposed indifference to him. Xerxes and all the greatest heroes may have felt the same, but none of them died in this stage of their sorrow. George Washington also lived to love a number of other girls.

About this time, and still in his callow youth, he was in deep dejection over a girl whom he called his “lowland beauty.” We do not know her name. She may have been Mary Bland who later married Henry Lee. She may have been Lucy Grymes, who married another Henry Lee and became the mother of General Robert E. Lee. Whoever she was, she held a place in Washington’s heart from

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which at the time she could not be dislodged even by the presence near at hand of Mary Cary, sister of Sally Cary Fairfax. In three different letters that have been preserved George tells of his hopeless longing for this unidentified girl, whom he loves to distraction, but whom he is sure would refuse him if he told her of his love. In the same letters he tells of the presence near him of Mary Cary, who is not yet a comfort to his sad heart. A quotation from one of these letters will show how he thought he felt:

“My place of residence is at present at His Lordship where I might was my heart disengag’d pass my time very pleasantly as there’s a very agreeable Young Lady Lives in the same house (Col. George Fairfax’s wife’s Sister) but as that’s only adding Fuel to fire it makes me the more uneasy for by often and unavoidably being in Company with her revives my former Passion for your Low Land Beauty whereas was I to live more retired from Young Women I might in some measure alleviate my sorrows by burying that chastness for as I am very well assured that’s the only antidote or remedy that I can be relieved by or only recess that can administer any cure or help to me as I am well convinced was ever to attempt anything I should only get a denial which would only be an adding grief to uneasiness.”

That is a sentence of terrible length, and no doubt George Washington thought he felt as badly

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as he wrote. He told the same story to three friends and correspondents, to Robin Washington, to a friend John and to another girl named Sally.

But he did not wear crape for ever for his low-land beauty. Mary Cary in time took his mind off his earlier troubles, and even her married sister, Sally Fairfax, seemed to him a very attractive young woman. There still were good fish in the sea. He did not waste a great deal of time over those that had failed to attach themselves to his hook.

He appears to have made adventurous love to Mary Cary, and to have forgotten all the earlier objects of his devotion and despair. But she seems to have rejected him.

We do not know any good reason why George Washington should have been unfortunate in his love-affairs. He was a courageous young man, of good family and with good prospects. It may be that some of the girls he sighed for were sighing at the same time for him. Still, if he had some reason to assure himself that he was unpopular with women, we may at least conjecture what the reason may have been. He was, as has been said, a big, raw-boned young fellow, with hands which Lafayette said were the largest he ever saw upon a human being, and feet not out of proportion. He must have had a somewhat lengthened awkward age in which he felt with undue sensitiveness

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his lack of grace and charm. Perhaps there was a time when he danced awkwardly, and trod on his partner's toes. But that stage passed in time, and Washington, big and tall as he was, was recognized as not lacking in grace, and was thought of as a very desirable future husband for some nice Virginia girl. But that did not comfort him in the days of his puppy-love. He took his love-affairs very seriously, and his acrostic to Frances Alexander was not his only piece of mediocre love poetry.

Fortunately, a healthy young man who loves a horse and dog can outlive a long series of youthful misadventures in unrequited love.

CHAPTER VIII

HIS FIRST FIGHTS

1754

GOVERNOR ROBERT DINWIDDIE understood the defiance of the French as an invitation to war, and he began to prepare for it at once. The French were erecting more forts in territory that he believed belonged to Virginia, and he wanted to build forts of his own to defend the land from attack and if necessary to make an attack himself. He secured authority from the Legislature to raise six companies of troops, and the Virginia Assembly granted him an appropriation of ten thousand pounds, and undertook to direct the expenditure of the money through the supervision of a committee. George Washington asked for a promotion and got it. He had been a major; he now became lieutenant-colonel, with a salary of twelve shillings six pence a day. He complained of the wages. It must be admitted that George Washington was much given to complaining; and both then and later he had more than enough to complain about.

These six companies were to have been com-

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manded by Colonel Joshua Fry, a graduate of Oxford, and a professor in William and Mary College. This officer never reached the troops whom he was appointed to command. He was slow in departing for this duty, and was thrown from his horse and injured so that he died. Lieutenant-Colonel George Washington was at the front with the men, and whatever had been done by way of organization and fortification had been under his direction. He became the commander of the expedition. He was very young; he was totally inexperienced in military affairs; he had fully as much courage as was good for an ambitious and hot-tempered youth eager for military distinction. He needed to serve a severe apprenticeship under an officer of experience, but no such officer was at hand to give him the instruction of which he stood in need. And so Colonel George Washington, twenty-two years of age and having never commanded even a company, was at the head of an expedition that was almost certain to bring on, and that did bring on, a war.

Washington's first battle was at Great Meadows, May 28, 1754, near the line between Maryland and Pennsylvania. With him as an ally was the Half-King with a band of Indian warriors, and the French were assisted by other Indians. Washington attacked the French in the early morning, and won a victory. The French suffered a loss of ten

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men killed, among them their commander, De Jumonville. Twenty-one of their men were captured. It was Washington's first experience as a soldier, and he was victorious.

In his report, which was forwarded to London, Washington said:

"I fortunately escaped without any wound, for the right wing where I stood was exposed to and received all the enemy's fire, and it was the part where the man was killed and the rest wounded. I heard the bullets whistle, and believe me, there is something charming in the sound."

This report was read to the king, and it was the first time he had ever heard of George Washington. Horace Walpole recorded the incident and the king's very proper comment about George's pleasure on hearing the sound of bullets: "He would not say so, if he had been used to hear many." Experienced soldiers do not enjoy the sound of whistling bullets. It is only the rash and inexperienced who love the sound. Washington was brave, but his was, at this stage, the courage of the inexperienced.

He was soon to have other experiences which made the sound of bullets less pleasant.

However, Washington had one very good reason for a courage that bordered on recklessness. He knew, and said more than once, that if he showed

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signs of timidity, or permitted himself to be defeated, the Indians would desert to the French, and he greatly needed the help of the Half-King. That help, he knew, was uncertain at best.

Governor Dinwiddie was beseeching the other colonies to assist in the general fight against the French. They were tardy and reluctant. Pennsylvania, remembering its Quaker principles, was disinclined to do any fighting. New York sent two companies:

“Not Complete in Numbers. Many of them old that can not undergo a March of 200 miles in the wilderness, and burthened with thirty Women and Children.”

Bad as the New York troops were, the Virginia recruits were no improvement upon them. While Washington was in process of gathering his little command, he wrote to the governor describing them as “loose, Idle Persons that are quite destitute of House and Home.” He said:

“There is many of them without Shoes, others want Stockings, some without Shirts, and not a few have Scarce a Coat, or waistcoat to their backs.”

If any of them were men of extraordinary courage, Washington did not observe it, and some of them he denounced as drunkards and cowards.

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When things began to go badly, many of the men left him and went home. He wrote to Dinwiddie:

“I again take the Liberty of recommending your Honour the great necessity there is of a regulation of the Soldiers’ pay. They are now Naked and can’t get credit even for a Hatt, and are teasing the Officers every Day. The soldiers are deserting constantly, and yesterday while we were at Church 25 of them collected and were going off in the face of their Officers, but were stopped and imprison’d, before the Plot came to its full height. We have catch’d two Deserters, while I keep imprison’d till I receive your Honour’s answer how far the Martial Law may be extended, and it is absolutely necessary that an example be made of some warning to others; for there is scarce a Night or opportunity but what some or other are deserting, often going two or three or 4 at a time.”

It must have been about this time that Washington came to understand how serious an expedition he had undertaken. Colonel Joshua Fry was to have come to him at this point with reinforcements. The reinforcements came, such as they were, but Washington learned that Fry was dead. Upon him, George Washington, a mere youth, depended the fate of this expedition. Blood had been shed; the war had begun; he had a long march to make, and a difficult task lay ahead.

In February of that same year, 1754, an Eng-

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lishman, Captain Trent, who was engaged in the fur trade, had begun to build a fort at the junction of the two rivers that form the Ohio. Before he had proceeded far with his fortification, the French approached, and he had to withdraw. The French then occupied the place, and built a fort, which they named Fort Duquesne. It stood where Pittsburgh now is, in a location manifestly important. What Washington wanted to do was to move through the wilderness and capture this place. But he had come to the end of all roads. If he captured Fort Duquesne he must bring up his cannon and his wagons. Completing his fortification at Great Meadows, he wrote to Governor Dinwiddie, that he now had a small palisaded fort, "in which, with my small numbers, I shall not fear the attack of five hundred men." This little fortification he named Fort Necessity. It was not so strong as Washington thought, and was badly located.

Moving slowly forward, and cutting his road as he went, he proceeded no great distance when he received news that the French were approaching with a superior force. The rumor was all too well founded. The French were approaching, and their commanding officer was a brother of De Jumonville, who had been killed in the first battle. Washington called a council of war, and it was decided that the only safe plan was to return to Fort Necessity. It was a weary march back, and the

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men were greatly fatigued and badly frightened when they arrived. On July third, the French attacked the fort. Washington's wearied and insubordinate force huddled inside, and made feeble resistance against the French, led on by a commander eager for revenge for the death of his brother. The Indians were with the French, and their numbers and known methods of warfare caused terror. Washington's powder was wet. Food gave out, and ammunition was low; but liquor, unfortunately, was abundant. A heavy rain put some of Washington's muskets out of commission. Washington and his little army in the beleaguered fort held out till the fall of night, and then accepted an invitation to a parley. Further resistance was hopeless, and a surrender was agreed upon.

On the morning of the fourth of July, 1754, George Washington surrendered to the French, but he and his men walked out with the honors of war. There was not much honor in the surrender for George Washington. He signed articles which acknowledged the attack on the French, and the death of De Jumonville. This document was written in French. When later that paper was translated into English, Washington was surprised to learn that he had admitted that he had "assassinated" the French commander. Certainly he had never intended to make any such confession, but the document, published in France and reproduced

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in translation in London, had no small part in the controversy of the French and Indian War, which now had begun. Dinwiddie wrote of this incident:

“It’s true in the Capitulat’n after they maks use of the Assassina’n, But Washington not know’g Fr. was deceived by the Interpreter. If he had not, he declares y’t he w’d not have agreed to it, tho’ in great Straits. The Interpreter was a Polt-roon.”

We may assure ourselves of the justice of this defense, especially as we know Dinwiddie had become displeased with Washington and was much disposed to blame him in order to shield himself. In March, 1755, Dinwiddie wrote:

“You know Washington’s conduct was in many steps wrong, and did not conform to his Orders from me, or he had not engaged till the other forces had joined him. However, now, I am in great Hopes something essential may be done if the Colonies join with Spirit in strengthening the Gen’s Hands, and not be parcimonious.”

The general from whom so much was expected arrived a few days later, General Edward Braddock. On the nineteenth of February, 1755, he landed in Virginia with British troops. There appeared good reason to expect that short work would now be made with the French. The colonies

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were voting men and money. Four months before the arrival of Braddock, Washington, hurt by criticisms which he believed unjust, stung by a reduction in rank and pay, and tired of the annoying conditions which gave him responsibility without authority, resigned his command, and returned to his home at Mount Vernon. He had no expectation at that time of being associated with General Braddock in his prospective expedition. By this time, we may believe, the sound of bullets had become less musical in his ears. Indeed, we may go to Parson Weems and learn with a good degree of confidence that Washington's joy in a military career had received a heavy jolt. The passage has something to say about George's family, especially his mother, and is worth quoting:

“Where George got his great military talents, is a question which none but the happy believers in a *particular Providence* can solve; certain it is, his worthy parents had no hand in it. For of his father, tradition says nothing, save that he was a most amiable old gentleman; one who made good crops, and scorned to give his name to the quill-drivers of a counting-room. And as to his mother, it is well known that she was none of Bellona's firey race. For as some of the Virginia officers, just after the splendid actions of Trenton and Princeton, were complimenting her on the generalship and *rising glory* of her son, she replied, with all the sang-froid of an old Friend, ‘*Ah, dear me!*

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This fighting and killing is a sad thing! I wish George would come home and look after his plantation!

“Nor does it appear that nature had mixed much of gunpowder in the composition of any of his brothers: for when one of them, in the time of Braddock’s war, wrote him a letter, signifying like a wish to *enter into the service*, George, it is said, gave him this short reply: ‘*Brother, stay at home, and comfort your wife.*’”

When we view from this distance the conduct of Washington in these first battles of his, we can but admire his courage and blame him for his want of discretion. He had advanced into the wilderness with a small and untrained body of men, and he was likely to encounter, and did encounter, forces superior in numbers to his own, not only of French and French Canadians, but of Indians, who knew the forests and the most effective methods of fighting. He was brave to the point of folly. He made no adequate preparation for such an adventure. Furthermore, when he had actually entered upon warfare, and had angered the French by the killing of the officer in command of the force first sent against him, he had little reason to expect mercy from the next force, commanded by the dead man’s brother. His Indian allies watched him with keen observation, and when they saw the French about to attack, they quietly slipped away into the forest.

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The Half-King, when questioned later, left this criticism of Washington on record, and we must say that he had some ground for his opinion:

“The colonel was a good-natured man, but had no experience. He took upon him to command the Indians as his slaves, and would have them every day upon the scout and to attack the enemy by themselves, but would by no means take advice from the Indians. He lay in one place from one full moon to the other, without making any fortifications, except that little thing on the meadow; whereas, had he taken advice, and built such fortifications as I advised him, he might easily have beat off the French. But the French in the engagement acted like cowards, and the English like fools.”

George Washington had abundant courage, but he had much to learn before he was to become a great soldier.

CHAPTER IX

BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT

1755

SICK and weary as George Washington thought himself to be of military life and its disappointments, he was ill at ease when he saw Braddock's army of two thousand well-trained men, and observed the colonies rising with some approach to a united spirit for the resistance of the French. He must have expressed to some one his wish that he could have a share in what was about to occur. On March 2, 1755, he received an invitation to join the expedition as a member of the staff of General Braddock. He accepted the invitation, acknowledging that he wanted to learn the art of the military profession from so able and experienced a general as Braddock. The "most flattering prospects of intimacy" with that officer made strong appeal to him.

In view of the damaging criticisms to which Washington had been subject, and the fact that Governor Dinwiddie was no longer supporting him in any effective fashion, General Braddock's desire to have Washington as a member of his

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official family is proof that that general, hearing as he must have heard all the gossip and the scandal of the French charges, thought highly of the young officer. Braddock's confidence must have rested on what seemed to him reliable evidence of Washington's ability and character. We do not need for our assurance the evidence on which Braddock based his opinion, but the opinion is valuable nevertheless. For Braddock, newly arrived after Washington's defeat, and while the French charges were widely current, would not have invited to a position of this character a discredited man.

It is interesting to learn, not only from Mr. Weems, but from Washington's own correspondence, that Washington's mother, having heard that he was considering a return to army life, made a journey to Mount Vernon, seeking to persuade him not to return to the life of a soldier. To Captain Orme, General Braddock's aide, Washington wrote:

"The arrival of a good deal of company (among whom is my mother, alarmed at the report of my intention to attend your fortunes) prevents me the pleasure of waiting upon you to-day. . . . I herewith send you a small map of the back country, which, though imperfect and roughly drawn, for want of instruments, may give you a better knowledge of the parts designated than you have hitherto had an opportunity of acquiring."

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How we should like to see that map! Instruments or no instruments, George Washington was an excellent draftsman, and he knew the country through which Braddock must pass as no other man capable of making a map could have known it. We may be sure, also, that it was not "roughly drawn." Entire accuracy was, of course, impossible, but we may be certain that Washington knew what maps Braddock could already have possessed, and that Washington was able to furnish him a better one. If there was any one thing which Braddock particularly wanted just then it was a good map, and a man who knew the region.

Nevertheless, Braddock set out in pursuance of other advice, and, instead of following the general course of the Potomac, marched to Fredericktown by way of Winchester. Washington was closing up his affairs at Mount Vernon, and had not yet joined him. He wrote that Braddock had "a good opportunity to see the absurdity of the route, and of damming it heartily."

Washington overtook Braddock, and was treated with great courtesy. He had returned with all his heart to a military life. But to his great sorrow, four days after the march began, he was taken with "violent fevers and pains in the head, which continued nine days without intermission." He had to be left behind with a wagon and a guard, and when he set forward the jolting of the wagon was

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agony. The doctor's warning that to proceed would endanger his life, and Braddock's promise to bring Washington to the front by the time there was any real fighting, held him for a time in the rear, but he was impatient to be in the front. "The General has given me his word of honor, in the most solemn manner," he wrote, that if there was to be a battle Washington should be brought forward and permitted to join the advance. Washington was there in ample time. The advance was slow. Roads had to be cut in places and improved in others.

Where the Allegheny and the Monongahela unite to form the Ohio, and not far from where Pittsburgh now stands, the French were still holding Fort Duquesne. This was the fort which Braddock was advancing to assault. But his battle occurred before he reached the fort itself. The location was within the present limits of the city of Pittsburgh, where now is the village of Braddock.

It is scarcely correct to say that Braddock was led into an ambush. Braddock's advance came upon a small force of Indians and Canadian French, and opened fire upon them. The Canadians ran, and so did the Indians, but a company of French regulars stood their ground. They made such resistance that Braddock's advance was halted, and the English began to retreat. The Indians then began

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to return, and, fighting in their usual way, gave effective fire from behind trees and other places of concealment. Braddock's men were advancing along a narrow road of their own cutting, where there was little or no opportunity to rally an effective force. Fired upon from both sides, the English troops broke, and communicated their terror to the rest of the force, who were coming up from the rear.

Lord Fairfax is said to have received a letter from some one who knew Braddock, describing him as a man without either fear or common sense. Perhaps he deserved that characterization. Certainly he was fearless, if we are to judge from his conduct at Fort Duquesne. He recklessly exposed himself to danger. Four horses were shot under him. No one ever called him a coward.

Accounts of the battle are confused and contradictory. We need not record them here. Braddock's army was woefully defeated. The French were surprised to find themselves the victors in a fight which they had expected to lose. Braddock himself was shot.

Both the English and the colonial troops blamed Braddock. His officers shielded themselves behind his obstinate refusal to take advice. Just what advice he had refused we do not quite know. It is said that he insisted on fighting in military order instead of permitting his men to fire from behind

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trees. But his chief difficulty was in getting his men to stand their ground and fire at all. We know that he was defeated and that he was fatally wounded. The battle occurred July 9, 1755, and Braddock died a few days later. He was buried in the road, and the cannon were dragged over his grave to obliterate the signs of it. Many years afterward his bones were found, and reinterred properly.

If Braddock's defeat is to be attributed to any one mistake, it would seem to have been that of accepting the advice of any one who wished him to advance upon the French by way of a road through Virginia. If Pennsylvania had been as much interested in the war as Virginia was, and had furnished Braddock as good a map from Philadelphia to the French fort as George Washington gave him of the route by way of Fort Cumberland, he could have advanced much nearer his destination through settled territory, and have found roads which if not good were at least not so bad, and which for a portion of the distance would have permitted two or more columns to push forward by parallel routes. But Pennsylvania was not greatly interested in the war, and Virginia was. So was her Governor Dinwiddie, and so was George Washington. Perhaps it was everybody's mistake, and not Braddock's alone.

Washington took early opportunity to write to

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his mother informing her about the battle, being chiefly concerned to relieve her mind from anxiety and from believing the situation worse than it really was. It was bad enough at the best. This is his letter:

“FORT CUMBERLAND, 18 July, 1755.

“HONORED MADAM:

“As I doubt not but you have heard of our defeat and, perhaps, had it represented in a worse light, if possible, than it deserves, I have taken this earliest opportunity to give you some account of the engagement as it happened, within ten miles of the French fort, on Wednesday the 9th instant.

“We marched to that place without any considerable loss, having only now and then a straggler picked up by the French and scouting Indians. When we came there we were attacked by a party of French and Indians, whose number, I am persuaded, did not exceed three hundred men; while ours consisted of about one thousand three hundred well-armed troops, chiefly regular soldiers, who were struck with such a panic that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive. The officers behaved gallantly in order to encourage their men, for which they suffered greatly, there being near sixty killed and wounded; a large proportion of the number we had.

“The Virginia troops showed a good deal of bravery, and were nearly all killed; for I believe, out of three companies that were there, scarcely thirty men are left alive. Captain Peyrouny, and all his officers down to a corporal, were killed. Cap-

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tain Polson had nearly as hard a fate, for only one of his was left. In short, the dastardly behavior of those they call regulars exposed all others, that were inclined to do their duty, to almost certain death; and at last, despite of all the efforts of the officers to the contrary, they ran, as sheep pursued by dogs, and it was impossible to rally them.

“The general was wounded, of which he died three days after. Sir Peter Halket was killed in the field, where died many other brave officers. I luckily escaped without a wound, though I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me. Captains Orme and Morris, two of the aids-de-camp, were wounded early in the engagement, which rendered the duty harder upon me, as I was the only person then left to distribute the general’s orders, which I was scarcely able to do, as I was not half recovered from a violent illness that had confined me to my bed and a wagon for above ten days. I am still in a weak and feeble condition, which induces me to halt here two or three days in the hope of recovering a little strength, to enable me to proceed homewards; from whence, I fear, I shall not be able to stir till towards September; so that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you till then, unless it be in Fairfax. Please to give my love to Mr. Lewis and my sister; and compliments to Mr. Jackson, and all other friends that inquire after me. I am, honored madam, your most dutiful son,

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

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This important thing happened, however, that George Washington emerged from the battle a popular hero. He was as brave as Braddock, and he knew more than Braddock about Indians. There appears to be no doubt that his courage and steadiness of nerve helped to save the defeat from being a complete disaster.

The temper of the little army, which at the outset was only two thousand strong, was in full accord with the spirit that gave Washington the glory of that inglorious day. The British officers were more than willing to blame Braddock, and to say, what was probably true, that he was obstinate and unteachable. The colonial troops were ready to deride the pretensions of discipline in the regular army. What Braddock would have said in his own defense, if he had lived, we do not know. He was dead, and no one chose to speak a good word for him except to commend his courage, which Washington and others did. The news that circulated through the colonies and which filtered back to England was that Braddock had died as the fool dieth, and that the hero of the battle was Colonel George Washington.

Washington's mother's brother, Joseph Ball, who practised law in London, and who had once written advising her not to let her son go to sea, now wrote direct to George:

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"Good cousin" was what he called George, for "cousin" was a more inclusive term then than now:

"Good cousin: It is a sensible pleasure to me to hear you have behaved yourself with such a martial spirit in all your engagements with the French. We have heard of General Braddock's defeat. Everybody blames his rash conduct. I desire you, as you may have opportunity, to give me a short account how you proceed. I am your mother's brother."

Yes, everybody blamed General Braddock for his rash conduct, and everybody praised George Washington. Nobody now remembered Washington's surrender of Fort Necessity. People forgot that he had been accused of assassination and was actually declared to have admitted it. Colonel George Washington rose high in popular esteem.

Governor Dinwiddie never wholly made up with Washington. The governor thought his young officer ungrateful and fault-finding, and he had some ground for thinking so. But on the whole Washington had served him well. Perhaps Washington ought to have been more patient and grateful, but he had proved himself a good soldier and a brave one.

CHAPTER X

BACKWOODS AND BOSTON

1755-1758

AFTER Braddock's defeat, Washington was for a time at Mount Vernon. His health was none too good, but it improved rapidly. At first it was uncertain what course would be pursued with regard to the French. Fortunately, they and the Indians did not seek to follow up their advantage after the rout of Braddock's forces. They still held Fort Duquesne, and it was deemed necessary that an expedition should be sent from Virginia and the other colonies, if not to attack that fort, at least to interpose resistance to any attempt the French might make to devastate the frontier. Just what was to be done about it was uncertain at the outset.

For a time Washington thought he was through with military life. Soon after his return to Mount Vernon, he wrote to John Augustine Washington:

"I am so little dispirited by what has happened that I am always ready and always willing to render my country any service that I am capable of, but *never* upon the *terms* I have done; having suffered much in my private fortune, besides im-

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pairing one of the best of constitutions. I was employed to go a journey in the winter (when I believe, few or none would have undertaken it), and what did I get by it? My expences borne! I was then appointed, with trifling pay, to conduct a handful of men to the Ohio. What did I get by *this*? Why, after putting myself to a considerable expence in equipping and providing necessities for the campaign, I went out and was soundly beaten, lost them all!—came in and had my commission taken from me, or, in other words, my *command* reduced, under pretence of an order from home! I then went out a volunteer with General Braddock, and lost all my horses and many other things; but this being a voluntary act, I ought not to mention *this*, nor should I have done it, was it not to show that I have been upon the losing order ever since I entered the service, which is now near two years. So that I think I can not be blamed, should I, if I leave my family again, endeavor to do it upon such terms as to prevent my suffering (to *gain* by it being the least of my expectation)."

Soon he began to feel better about it. The Virginia Legislature voted him three hundred pounds to compensate for the loss of his baggage, his pay was increased from fifteen to thirty shillings a day; and he liked money as also he liked evidence of appreciation. His mother began to be afraid he would go to war again, and he wrote to her:

"If it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio

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again, I shall, but if the Command is press'd upon me by the genl. voice of the Country and offer'd upon such terms as can't be objected against, it would reflect dishonour upon me to refuse it."

Early in September Washington was back at Fort Cumberland. He bore a commission which read:

"George Washington, Esquire, is by His Honor Governor Dinwiddie appointed Colonel of the Virginia Regiment and commander in chief of all the Forces that now are, and shall be Raised."

At this time we learn the character of the uniform which the officers were expected to wear, and it was not the red coat of the British army, but more nearly like what Washington was later to wear in the Colonial service:

"Every Officer of the Virginia Regiment to provide himself as soon as he can conveniently with a Suit of Regimentals of good blue Cloath; the Coat to be faced and cuffed with Scarlet, and trimmed with Silver: a Scarlet waistcoat, with Silver Lace; blue Breeches, and a silver laced Hat, if to be had, for Camp or Garrison Duty."

Washington issued this order:

"Colonel Washington has observed, that the men of his Regiment are very profane and reprobate—He takes this opportunity of informing them of

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his great displeasure at such practices, and assures them, if they do not leave them off, they shall be severely punished."

A situation arose which would now be of no historic importance if it had not involved Colonel Washington in a journey of considerable importance then and later. At Fort Cumberland, Washington was in command of all the Virginia forces, but he was on Pennsylvania soil. A certain Captain John Dagworthy, in command of forty-five soldiers from Maryland, held a British commission, and he refused to recognize the authority of Colonel Washington, whose commission was from the governor of Virginia. It was difficult to preserve discipline in any form, and quite impossible where a captain could defy a colonel appointed to chief command. The commander of the British forces in the colonies was General William Shirley of Boston, and Colonel Washington, delegating his command to another officer, set forth to Boston, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Captain George Mercer, and two servants, Thomas Bishop and John Alton. They left Alexandria February 4, 1756, and in four days were in Philadelphia. There they remained about five days. He was sufficiently prominent to be mentioned in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which said:

"Colonel Washington, of Virginia, but last from

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Philadelphia, left this city for Boston on Friday last."

This mention was in a communication from New York, where he remained four days. While he was there he visited the Microcosm, an exhibition of the world in miniature, and it cost him one pound, eight shillings and six pence, for he "treated" some ladies to the sight. Of this Microcosm we are told that it had taken the inventor twenty-two years to build it, and it was counted a very great achievement.

Washington rode on to Boston, where he stopped at the Cromwell's Head Tavern in School Street. He was a guest at the governor's mansion, and was taken out to Castle William. He was received with all due recognition, though there was no occasion for any important celebration in his honor.

He submitted his case to General Shirley, who ordered that:

"In case it shall happen that Colonel Washington and Captain Dagworthy should join at Fort Cumberland, It is my Orders that Colonel Washington should take the command."

This order was dated March fifth, and Colonel Washington was back in New York on the tenth. He remained four days, and stopped also for another short visit in Philadelphia.

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Soon he was back in Virginia, having gained the decision which he hoped for, and one which was clearly his due.

The story of George Washington during the period of the French and Indian War has to do with the region about Fort Cumberland and Fort Duquesne. It is to be remembered, however, that this was only a small fraction of the action in the seven years of strife between the French and English over their possessions in North America. In 1755 the English colonies were planning four military expeditions against the French. One was an invasion of Nova Scotia. The second was directed against Crown Point. The third was an attack upon Fort Niagara. The fourth was that against Fort Duquesne. After the defeat of Braddock, the expedition against Fort Duquesne was not pressed. It had been too costly for repetition. The wilderness was vast behind that fort, and if captured it still would have needed to be defended. It was cheaper and safer to defend Fort Cumberland, which was nearer to the settled portion of Virginia.

It is interesting to discover, that, much as Washington liked fine dress, he soon discarded, except for special occasions, the uniform that had been approved for use of his troops. He discarded the regimentals and put his men into attire such as the Indians used, and the plan worked well. No soldiers knew better how to prepare for warfare

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in the woods than did the Indians. White men dressed in hunting-shirts, leather leggings and moccasins were well fitted to meet the conditions of warfare on the frontier. Men in uniform were impeded, and were conspicuous targets.

There was no fighting of consequence during these months. Washington was back and forth several times between Fort Cumberland and Williamsburg or Alexandria. When at the front he appears to have lived in a house, for he paid forty pounds for rent of Captain Cocks' house, and that should have covered nearly if not quite the whole of the year 1756. The year 1757 was spent in Fort Cumberland and in travels connected with his military duties. About Christmas time he was back in Mount Vernon, and in March of the next year he wrote that he was under strict regimen, and under advice of physicians. A little later he wrote:

"I have been very much afflicted by Sickness since last fall, and am not yet recovered, but hope I am in a fair way of regaining my health."

But in April he was back at Winchester, and then at Fort Cumberland, and his records show that he rode hard and traveled rapidly.

Whatever blunders occurred on this last expedition against the French could not be charged to George Washington, nor, on the other hand, did the campaign develop any notable fighting that

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made any other man a popular hero. While there was no occasion for Washington to do anything notable in the closing months of the war, still he lost nothing of the honor he had already gained. When he appeared again at Williamsburg or in other places where he met notable people, he was hailed as the most conspicuous hero of the war that now was practically over, and, so far as he was concerned, entirely at an end. The honor, in spite of whatever mistakes he had made, was honestly earned.

Washington was glad enough when the time came for him to return from the frontier. It had been hard to preserve discipline when his soldiers were marching or fighting and was impossible when they were inactive. He had no end of trouble with drunkenness and immorality, and was criticized for the immoral condition of his camp. Indeed, if we may believe Governor Dinwiddie, "wickedness, immorality and profaneness" were not confined to camps, but had become "epidemical." Dinwiddie repeatedly denounced the low state of public morals in that dim twilight of peace, when the fighting was over but the war was not at an end. An inactive life did not please Washington, and he was indignant at criticisms which he knew were not without cause, but which dealt with matters he was unable to control.

Beside all this, he was sick. On November 7,

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1757, he was unable to write, but Captain Stewart wrote for him, saying:

“For upwards of three months past Colo. Washington has labored under a Bloody Flux. About a week ago his disorder greatly increased, attended with fevers. . . . The complication of Disorders greatly perplexes the Doctor.”

Dinwiddie was sick himself, and was about to leave Virginia, glad to be rid of his governorship, as Washington was relieved to relinquish his command. He wrote relieving Washington of his frontier duty, and wishing him a speedy recovery.

At that time Washington was so weak he sometimes doubted whether he would ever be well and thought he did not greatly care. But in due time he recovered and was glad to be alive.

The power of France in the New World was crumbling. While the troops from Virginia and the colonies near made no advance, the English colonials toward the north were slowly but surely gaining. There was not very much fighting, but France was unable to give sustained support to her forces far back in the woods, and the British were taking over, one by one, their rude and frail fortifications. It did not become necessary to fight another battle at Fort Duquesne. The small French and Indian garrison melted away till there were too few men to hold the place. On November 28,

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1758, Colonel George Washington was able to write to Governor Francis Fauquier, who had succeeded Dinwiddie, that the French had abandoned Fort Duquesne, and that it was now in possession of the colonial troops.

In 1759 Quebec was captured by the joint British and colonial forces; and in 1760 Montreal surrendered. The final struggle of vital importance was between Wolfe and Montcalm. Canada fell wholly under British control. The territory to the west was practically hers already.

It may be remembered also that not only Virginia but Massachusetts and the colonies to the north had that discipline in the French and Indian War, along with Virginia, which prepared them for the Revolution. Washington and the men whom later he was to command from his own state had had their experience on the Monongahela, but the men of Boston could say:

“No striplings we, but bear the arms that held the
French in check

The drum that beat at Louisburg and thundered
in Quebec.”

So the long war between the English and the French in America came to an end, and no one American officer gained so much honor out of it as Colonel George Washington of Virginia. He returned to Mount Vernon, put his farm in order, and made preparations for his marriage.

CHAPTER XI

THE WIDOW CUSTIS

1759

COLONEL WASHINGTON had met Mrs. Martha Custis in the spring of 1758. It was when he was on his way to Williamsburg with reports that he had occasion to be ferried across the Pamunkey or York River, and he stopped to pay a short visit to Major Chamberlayne who lived in New Kent County. There it was that he met Martha. The wonder is that they had not met before. He was a popular young bachelor, and she was a popular young widow. They moved in the same circle of society, and that circle was not large. It is easy enough to imagine circumstances under which they might have formed an earlier acquaintance. But apparently they were strangers when they met that day at White House in New Kent County.

Colonel Washington had expected to leave for Williamsburg immediately after luncheon, but he reflected that there was not great haste about his getting to Williamsburg. It was not difficult to persuade him to remain until the following morning. Having gone on to Williamsburg, he found

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it convenient to return by the same route. On this second visit he became engaged to Martha Custis.

In the old Bruton Church, at Williamsburg, said to be the oldest church building in the United States in which worship now is and from its beginning has been conducted, are many reminders of colonial days, running back to Pocohontas, and among the rest a tomb with a double inscription:

HIC JACET
ROLANDUS JONES, CLERICUS
FILIIUS ROLANDI JONES, CLERICI.

There lies Roland Jones, minister, son of Roland Jones, also a minister, and both of them ministers of that church. The older Roland Jones was great-great-grandfather, and his son was great-grandfather of Martha Dandridge. She was the daughter of Colonel John Dandridge, a planter, of New Kent, and his wife, Frances Jones, granddaughter of the younger Roland. So much for her family, which was a good one, even as families are reckoned in Virginia.

Martha was the eldest in a large family. She was born June 2, 1731. She was a little woman, such as a big man admires. She had hazel eyes and light brown hair. In due time she married a wealthy planter, Daniel Parke Custis. He was several years older than she. After a few years of married life, he died, leaving her with two chil-

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dren, a son named John Parke Custis, known as Jack or Jacky, and a daughter named Martha, whom the family called Patsy.

George Washington had almost reached the age of twenty-seven when on January 6, 1759, he married Martha Custis. She was not a brilliant woman, but was gracious, attractive and lovable. That she was rich was probably no disadvantage in Washington's eyes. According to Virginia law, her property became his. He was well landed already, but she brought him a greatly increased acreage, and about three hundred slaves. She brought a family tradition and an established social position. She was eight months older than her husband, but still was young and charming.

After the service, the bride rode back to her home, the White House, otherwise known as the Six Chimney House, in New Kent, drawn in her coach by six horses, with outriders. With her rode her bridesmaids and her mother. But Colonel George Washington, the bridegroom, rode on horseback as escort, and with him were his brave attendants. How the other men dressed we do not know, but Colonel George Washington was dressed in blue and silver and his clothes had scarlet trimmings. He had gold buckles on his knees.

We have no description of Martha's wedding-dress. It is to be assumed that she wore rich trappings suited to so imposing an event. But in these

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days when every one is informed what the bride wears, and it is not worth while to tell that the groom was in conventional black, it is interesting to remember that there was a day, no farther remote than January 6, 1759, when it was possible for a bridegroom to be properly attired and to have his clothing more a matter of comment and record than that of the bride or any of her attendant beauties.

We are not quite sure where Colonel George Washington and Mistress Martha Dandridge Custis were married. Bishop Meade who wrote an interesting and valuable book about old Virginia churches, believed that they were married at the White House, the Custis mansion, and that the officiating clergyman was Reverend Davis Mossum. Other authorities contend that the wedding took place in St. Peter's Church, on the Pamunkey River, a few miles from the White House, and that the party then returned to the White House for the festivities. This would appear the probable order of events, but we are not certain.

Washington had been looking wistfully at women and girls for ten or eleven years, and had thought himself broken-hearted again and again. He was now a married man, sober, as he always had been sober, but still very fond of society, fond of dancing, and much given to hospitality. For three months the Washingtons lived at the bride's

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home, and made many visits, and were much fêted and banqueted. There was mirth and there was music; there was feasting and much dancing. They visited Williamsburg and met the official people there. Then Colonel and Mrs. George Washington established themselves in the colonel's own home, at Mount Vernon on the Potomac. Mount Vernon became one of the best known homes in Virginia, and George Washington settled down upon his farm, and had real pride in its development. Rich he was, and fond of good living, but temperate, according to the standards of the time, and spending more hours in the saddle than he passed in the shade in comfort.

Year by year he increased the area of his cultivated land. He developed the various resources of his large estate. He and Martha paid and received formal visits throughout that portion of Virginia. Colonel George Washington was now a landed gentleman with a home and a wife, and a family of two stepchildren. To the sorrow of both himself and Martha, they had no children of their own.

It will be interesting to read a description of George Washington as he appeared in 1759, written by his aide, Captain George Mercer:

“Though distrusting my ability to give an adequate account of the personal appearance of Col.

THE WIDOW CUSTIS

George Washington, late commander of the Virginia Provincial troops, I shall, as you request, attempt the portraiture. He may be described as being as straight as an Indian, measuring six feet two inches in his stockings, and weighing 175 pounds, when he took his seat in the House of Burgesses in 1759. His frame is padded in with well-developed muscles, indicating great strength. His bones and joints are large, as are his hands and feet.

“He is wide-shouldered, but has not a deep or round chest, but is broad across the hips, and has rather long legs and arms. His head is well-shaped, though not large, but is gracefully poised on a superb neck. A large and straight rather than a prominent nose; blue-gray penetrating eyes, which are widely separated, and overhung by a heavy brow. His face is long rather than broad, with high, round cheek-bones, and terminates in a good, firm chin. He has a clear though rather a colorless pale skin, which burns with the sun. A pleasing, benevolent, though commanding countenance, dark brown hair, which he wears in a cue.

“His mouth is large, and generally firmly closed, but which from time to time discloses some defective teeth. His features are regular and placid, with all the muscles of his face under perfect control, though flexible and expressive of deep feeling when moved by emotions. In conversation he looks you full in the face, is deliberate, deferential and engaging. His voice is agreeable rather than strong. His movements and gestures are graceful, his walk majestic, and he is a splendid horseman.”

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While Washington was almost as tall as Lincoln, and Lincoln was very proud of every quarter inch of his stature, Washington habitually described himself as six feet in height; he was really six feet three as measured after his death. He suffered long from the diseases of the camp, and he had a tendency toward tuberculosis, of which, as we know, his brother had died. By outdoor life and vigorous exercise he gained great strength, and, like Lincoln, was a man of powerful physique.

CHAPTER XII

A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN

1759-1775

FOR sixteen years following his marriage, the life of George Washington was that of the typical Virginia planter. His affairs were conducted on a larger scale than those of other planters, because he had more money and more land than most of them, and also more practical sagacity and business ability. He and Martha furnished their large house in what was deemed appropriate style, and they lived the comfortable life of colonial gentry. It was not a life of idleness for either of them. Martha was an excellent housekeeper, and she had all the care that was appropriate to her position.

As for Colonel George Washington, he rose, winter or summer, at daybreak. During a considerable portion of the year, this was about four o'clock. He did not disturb Martha or any of the household, but ate his simple breakfast of hoe-cake and honey and tea. Hoe-cake was originally baked upon a hoe. It consisted of corn meal, mixed with water and sometimes a little salt, and spread in a thin cake. This was baked above a fire of coals

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and eaten hot. The hoe with its long handle was a convenient implement for a small cake, but the process took the temper out of the hoe. In time a flat iron pan with a handle was substituted for the hoe, but the name remained. Hoe-cake thus prepared is good, and honey makes it delicious. George Washington was a good judge of a good breakfast. Also he liked plenty of tea.

After breakfast, he mounted his horse and rode about his plantations. He wore dark clothes, a broad white or gray hat, and he carried at his saddle-bow a large umbrella.

After a ride of two or three hours he returned, changed his clothing and ate a second breakfast, usually with ham and eggs as well as corn bread. This meal he often shared with the family.

Again he was in the saddle, riding to another plantation, or overseeing the erection of a mill or barn, and returning for luncheon at two o'clock. In the afternoon he visited with guests, of whom there were many. The third meal was at night. In the afternoon he attended to correspondence.

He liked games, and often played with guests in the evening. He enjoyed music, though he himself was not a musician. Although his day began early, he was not always early in his retirement. He slept well, and a short night gave him such rest as he needed.

Even then he might have said, as later he did

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say in good-natured complaint, that his home was more like an inn than the private house of a gentleman who had work to do; but he was very gracious to his guests and enjoyed them. He liked a hearty laugh, but his habitual demeanor was grave.

Martha knew how to obtain from him what she wanted. She took firm hold of a button of his coat and held to it while she looked up at him. His grave face relaxed when she teased him for what she desired, and if she ever failed to secure her wish we do not know of it.

He carried the purse, and he kept a record of all transactions. He credited to the account of the two children every farthing that belonged to their share, and he did not fail to charge Patsy's account with a shilling for the mending of her hairpin. He was a most painstaking bookkeeper, and when he handed Martha four pounds or any other sum for pocket-money, he set it down in his book.

He was very proud of his accuracy as a bookkeeper, and his entries were made with precision. He was careful in his expenditures and watchful of his receipts. But neither Martha nor her children ever found him otherwise than liberal in his expenditures for them. Martha was attired according to London's latest fashions, and in gowns and other garments that her husband ordered from that city. If George Washington gained a fortune by marrying her, she lost nothing by marrying him. His

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bookkeeping shows that Martha was well provided for.

Few of the Virginia country churches held service every Sunday. It was the custom for one, two, three or four churches to engage the services of a minister each for one Sunday in the month. To this day, not only in rural Virginia, but quite generally in Kentucky and Tennessee, one Sunday in the month is all that any one denomination expects in the way of church service in country districts. The Methodists may hold service on the first Sunday in the month, the Baptists on the second. On the third Sunday the Presbyterians may conduct worship and the Disciples on the fourth. If there is an unoccupied Sunday, it may be spent at home, or in a longer ride to a service elsewhere, and a visit to relatives on the way. In colonial Virginia the churches were of the Established Church, that is, the Episcopal. Some of the ministers were good men, but others were of the fox-hunting variety, whose bishops had been willing to spare them from England, and who, in the New World, contented themselves with the minimum of clerical duty.

George Washington attended church, as his diary shows, about once a month and on special occasions. On the day the Boston Port Bill went into effect, he fasted all day. When he did not go to church, he wrote letters, and spent the day quietly. He was a vestryman in the near-by

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Pohick Church, and later also in the larger church at Alexandria, and he contributed to the support of other churches.

His religion was of a practical kind. He was not greatly interested in theological matters, but he was reverent, earnest and high-minded. He was by far the most influential man in the neighborhood, and he cast his influence on the side of the church and of righteous living. Ministers were frequent guests at Mount Vernon, and Colonel and Mrs. Washington visited churches at some distance from their home when there was special occasion to do so, but usually they were in their place in one of the nearer churches. There were times when Pohick Church was without a minister. Then the Washingtons worshiped at Alexandria, and drove thither in a goodly carriage, and sat in a prominent pew.

Washington was never a great reader. His life was an outdoor life. He did not spend many of his spare hours in his library. But he had books, and he used them. He was what would now be called a scientific farmer. He did not content himself with farming as it always had been conducted. He wrote to England ordering a book containing "the best System now extant of Agriculture." He learned of a small octavo volume with some such title as "a New System of Agriculture, or a Speedy Way to Grow Rich," and he ordered it from London. He asked also for "a book lately

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published, done by various hands, but chiefly collected from the papers of Mr. Hale." But he did not want to buy this book if there was a better one; he wanted the best. Accordingly he said, "If this is known to be the best, pray send it, but not if any other is in high esteem."

He made long notes of his readings from Tull's *Husbandry*, Duhamel's *A Practical Treatise on Husbandry*, *The Farmer's Compleat Guide*, Home's *The Gentleman Farmer* and other books.

It is interesting to observe that these notes were made rather steadily during the years between his marriage and the Revolution, and that then there is a gap of eight years, and they begin again, with notes from new books purchased, and new knowledge sought. Lord Fairfax was correct in his opinion that Washington's education would continue as long as he lived.

There was young life at Mount Vernon. Mrs. Washington's two children grew up. John Parke Custis, or "Jack" as he was called, in time needed a tutor. But Jack did not take to study. Like the average Virginia planter of his day, perhaps like Washington himself, he took more to "Horses, Dogs and Guns," as Washington wrote. When he was fourteen, Washington engaged a tutor for him, but he still had more of the tastes of a horse-racer, according to his guardian, than those of a scholar. This did not please Washington; for while

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in his own youth Washington had displayed the same general aptitudes, Jack Custis started life on a much higher social level than his stepfather had done, and Washington was anxious that he should be an educated gentleman.

Next to horses, dogs and guns, Jack liked dress and society. He had two or three flirtations, which gave his parents some anxiety. Washington made earnest attempt to interest him in books, but he was not a brilliant student.

Washington had had smallpox, and knew its danger. He came to know of inoculation, and he and Martha agreed that Jacky ought to undergo that experiment; but she was a worrying mother; so George had Jacky inoculated while he was away from Mount Vernon and did not let Martha know until he had recovered. Later, after a struggle, Martha herself underwent the same experience.

But there was no such way of inoculating Jacky against love. While he was still a young lad he was in love with Nellie Calvert. The match was an entirely suitable one, except for their youth and Jack's instability; but these considerations did not restrain the young people. Jack gave up college, married Nellie Calvert, and brought her to Mount Vernon. The young couple spent much of their short married life there. They and their children, four in number, gave vivacity and color to the staid mansion.

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Martha, or "Patsy" Custis developed epilepsy, and her condition caused her mother and stepfather much anxiety. Nothing was left undone that devoted love could do for the poor girl. Washington was always ordering toys for her from London, dolls that cost a guinea, dresses for the dolls in addition, and other toys whose selection he left to his London agents. What we know, through Washington's diary, of the medical treatment prescribed for Patsy, shows how little physicians knew then of the proper course with people suffering from this sad disease. We could wish even now that they knew how to cure it, but the Washingtons did the best they knew, and the best the doctors knew, which was not very much or very good. They took Patsy to the warm springs in hope that their warmth and medicinal properties would help her, but there was no improvement. In 1773 she died suddenly. Her mother and her stepfather were both in deep sorrow over her death.

Patsy's part of the estate which had been left to her by her father was divided, on her death, one half going to her brother Jack, and the other to her mother, or rather, according to law, to her stepfather. In whosoever name it stood, Washington had the care of it, and handled it honorably and well.

Washington had bought Patsy "a good spinnet" made by a celebrated London maker, and he

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liked the music. It is to be feared that Mrs. Washington herself was not an accomplished musician and had little to offer her husband in that way. Music was furnished by the young people, and Washington loved their merriment and in a dignified way he shared it. He liked young life and missed it when he did not have it about him. His relations with his stepchildren, and later with his stepgrandchildren, leave no occasion for regret or criticism. He did a father's full duty, and freely gave a father's love.

Before Washington returned from his last campaign against the French, he was elected a member of the House of Burgesses, the Virginia Legislature. This was a deserved and appropriate honor and Washington appreciated it. An interesting story is told of the occasion when he first took his seat in the House of Burgesses, some three months after his marriage. The speaker, Mr. Robinson, publicly welcomed him to the assembly, and in very hearty words thanked him for his services to Virginia in defense of her homes in the late war. Washington rose and attempted to reply, but was so overcome by confusion he stammered and was unable to speak. "Sit down, Mr. Washington," said the speaker, "your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language I possess."

Washington was a faithful attendant upon the

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sessions of the Burgesses, and while he seldom spoke, he was regarded as one of the men of conspicuously sound judgment, and his opinions, expressed with modesty and at the same time with clearness and decision, had weight with his associates.

For about one month in each year, Washington was at Williamsburg, the capital, sitting with the House of Burgesses. Much of the time Martha was with him. On Sundays they sat in the old Bruton Church, and during the week, Colonel and Mrs. Washington shared in the social gaiety of that little frontier capital. Virginia then was a hundred and fifty years old, and had put far away the memory of the crudities of the beginnings of the plantation. There were concerts, puppet-shows, wax-works, performing bears and even theaters in Williamsburg. Washington attended them all, and set down in his diary the precise cost of admission. When he began attending such performances he paid a shilling or a little more for a ticket, but when he became a man of note, he paid sometimes as much as nine shillings, and he frequently bought tickets for his friends and guests. He and Mrs. Washington greatly enjoyed these performances. They were both fond of dancing, and both at Williamsburg and Alexandria, as well as at Mount Vernon, they did much of it.

Washington did not fail to notice the refresh-

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ments on these occasions. Of one event where food was abundant but not of high quality he wrote:

“Went to a ball at Alexandria, where Musick and dancing was the chief Entertainment, however in a convenient room detached for the purpose abounded great plenty of bread and butter, some biscuits, with tea and coffee, which the drinkers could not distinguish from hot water sweetened. Be it remembered that pocket handkerchiefs served the purposes of Table cloths & napkins and that no apologies were made for either. I shall therefore distinguish this ball by the stile and title of the Bread and Butter Ball.”

We can imagine George and Martha from time to time sharing a laugh over their memory of “the Bread and Butter Ball.” They enjoyed a laugh, both of them. Hers was a merry little laugh, and his a large and loud one.

It is an attractive picture we have of Washington in those years before the Revolution. Our knowledge of it comes to us through his own diaries and his extensive correspondence. We are surprised at his industry, his attention to detail, his record of weather and crops and of work performed by particular servants. Nothing appears to have escaped his notice.

But he was not a slave of his work. He found time for the enjoyment of his home, for sedate recreation with Jack and Patsy, for pleasant chats

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with Martha, who was very much more a mother than she was a scholar, and for parties and fox-hunts with his guests and neighbors.

The products he shipped to England were loaded on to boats at his own dock. The goods he purchased were floated to the very dooryard of Mount Vernon. He had his own blacksmith shops, his own mill, his own distillery, his own tannery. He saw to the improvement of his live stock and kept careful record of the pedigree of his hunting dogs. He was rich enough to have delegated all this labor to overseers, but he did it himself. Prosperity did not make him indolent or soften his muscles.

It is interesting to note that Washington was increasingly of the opinion that slave labor was unprofitable. He watched his slaves at their tasks, and compared the amount of work which one of them would perform in a day with that which he could secure from a white man who had to return an equivalent for his pay or be discharged. He found slave labor very costly, and while he saw no immediate way to get rid of the system, he believed it to be morally and economically bad. He was not, however, a master who coddled his slaves. He was not a very sentimental man, and when his slaves shirked, as they commonly did, he was not very gentle with them. Because he was no sentimentalist, his convictions on the slavery question are the more impressive. He "wished

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from his soul," as he said, that Virginia, even in his day, would abolish slavery, and he earnestly hoped that if this could not occur immediately, it might not long be delayed. The prompt cessation of the slave system, he declared "might prevent much future mischief." How right he was on this matter, the future was to show.

He liked wine, and used it with a freedom that rather surprises us, yet temperately, as judged by the results. He did not like tobacco, except in the form of snuff. Smoking was offensive to him. He observed, too, that the culture of tobacco wore out his land, and he disliked it both as a crop and as a habit that he counted expensive and unpleasant.

He was a very practical man, and his attention to detail must have made him an exacting overseer. He was liable to appear on any of his plantations at any hour of the day, making troublesome inquiries about the inadequate output of his fields or his mills or his shops or tanneries. He was a rather stern and exacting master, and he demanded a full day's work for a day's wage.

But when the day's work was over, he was the genial host, entertaining bountifully, dancing, playing cards, attending the theater, and engaging in all the pastimes that belonged to the landed gentry of Virginia in that day.

Washington was greatly given to writing. His pages of letters and journals and accounts number

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many thousand. No one knows how many there are. But there is almost no indication of his own feelings or meditations. He was not given to thinking how things affected him. He described events as he saw them, almost never wasting any words to record what memories or emotions were stirred within him by the scenes he witnessed or shared.

Washington was much addicted to statistics. In March, 1774, he computed the numbers of some of his various forms of enjoyment for a period beginning in January, 1768, a little more than six years. He had attended the theater thirty-seven times, horse-races twenty-nine times, concerts five times and barbacues twice. He had gone fishing for pleasure not quite once a year; his total record was five times. Thirty-one times he had gone gunning with no success, but nine times he had brought home ducks, the total number being twenty-six. Six times he had hunted for deer, and he had killed three. He had gone fox-hunting one hundred fifty-five times; had had no success eighty-five times, but had killed seventy-one foxes and one raccoon.

Certainly he was no disciple of Isaak Walton. Sitting quietly on the bank, and meditating while the fishes refused to bite, was too tame sport for George Washington. But following the hounds across field and fence, through wood and meadow, was wholly to his liking.

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Washington loved military life, but if he had been inclined to fight at every opportunity, he could have added to his military record in those years, for the Cherokee War broke out in South Carolina in 1759, and it is interesting to find that Washington had strong sympathy with the Indians in their declaration that the white settlers had not kept faith with them. Later, Pontiac's conspiracy threatened the Northwest, but Washington remained on his plantation. There were other Indian wars, but he did not go to them. He had had enough of war.

In 1770 he made what he called his "Journey to the Ohio," passing down the river beyond Pittsburgh and exploring territory well beyond what he had previously seen. His journey was undertaken primarily to locate the lands that had been granted to Virginia officers for services during the French and Indian War. He was also interested in prospective purchases of land on his own account. He set forth on Friday, October fifth, and returned home Saturday, December first, having been gone nearly two months. This, more even than his previous expeditions, made clear to him the value of the then wild lands beyond the bounds of civilization, and their importance to the welfare of the colonies.

It is interesting to note also a journey in 1773 to Philadelphia, where he was entertained by Gov-

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ernor Richard Penn, and thence to New York, where he participated in a testimonial dinner to General Thomas Gage, with whom he had served under Braddock. Gage was popular in the colonies before the outbreak of the Revolution, and Washington held him in high esteem.

While Washington's journey to these cities was impressive in its public functions, we know from his own letter the real purpose of his expedition. He said to Lord Dunmore:

"The design of my journey to New York is to take my son-in-law, Mr. Custis, to King's College. If your Lordship, therefore, has any letters or commands, either at that place or Philadelphia, I shall think myself honored in being the bearer of them, as well as benefitted by means of the introduction."

The term "son-in-law" sounds strange to us, but in Washington's day it was a proper way to speak of a stepson.

Lord Dunmore's letters of introduction made Washington almost an official ambassador to the officials in these two important cities. It was well Washington had satisfaction in these incidents, for as is known Jacky Custis was not a success as a student, and his stepfather's care to have him secure a college education was wasted.

But mainly Washington's journeys in this period

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were to Alexandria to attend court or church service, for he went there about as often as he did to the nearer church called Pohick, to his mother's at Fredericksburg, where he went often, or to Williamsburg, where he and Martha dined with the governor or the speaker, and attended entertainments when there were any, and he sat through discussions that were not usually very exciting in the House of Burgesses. So passed the quiet years that were imperceptibly bringing nearer the war that was to tear the colonies away from their allegiance to Great Britain, and make the name of George Washington either hated as a rebel or honored as the founder of a new nation.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

1775

THE French and Indian War might have been expected to unite the hearts of Great Britain and her American colonies, but it can not be said that this was its result. To Great Britain it seemed that the colonies were very expensive, calling for much protection, and showing themselves most reluctant to bear their share in the expense. To the colonies it seemed that they had had to take up arms whenever Great Britain had a quarrel with France, and that England left them to suffer most of the danger and do the greater part of the fighting.

George Washington was a loyal British subject. He was far from being an agitator, and he did not want any more wars. But some of the oppressive measures of Great Britain toward her American subjects so angered him that as early as April 5, 1769, he considered the liberties of the American people in danger, and said:

“That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defense of so valuable a bless-

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ing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion. Yet a-ms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the *dernier ressort*. Addresses to the throne, and remonstrances to Parliament, we have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of. How far, then, their attention to our right and privileges is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufactures, remains to be tried.”

It was the curious habit of the times to pretend to disguise a name or a word by the omission of one or more letters, and the word “arms” was a word that Washington treated in that manner. But that was the word he used. He did not, however, favor an appeal to arms if it could be avoided. What he favored was an agreement not to import British-made goods till Great Britain should treat her colonies fairly. And it was six years afterward that George Washington actually took up the arms he wrote about in 1769. He was not a man to be stampeded into war. We need not assume that everything that was done by the people on this side of the water was right, and everything done on the other side was wrong. Still less could we be justified in assuming that because there may have been wrongs on both sides, we as Americans are forbidden to affirm the righteousness of the cause for which our fathers fought. We have no need to denounce everything that Great Britain

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did or defend everything her colonies did; still less shall we be justified in any lack of faith in those brave men who for the liberty of these colonies pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

Still further, it is extremely difficult to say just what are the causes of any war. Aristotle taught, and it is a good adage to remember, that "The causes of war are profound, and the occasions of war are slight." Too much that has been written about the War of the Revolution has concerned itself with occasions rather than causes.

Some of the occasions of the Revolutionary War were quite trivial: the stamp tax, the tax on tea and other rather small though vexatious matters of administration. They provoked a growth in a discontent that was already in existence, and they brought about such clashes between the colonists and the British authorities as the Boston Tea Party, the so-called Boston Massacre and other incidents that preceded the Revolution. But these, also, were occasions, rather than causes. For causes we should need to go farther back.

Upon the British throne was a stupid and stubborn king, George III, who was much more a German than an Englishman, and he had a misinformed ministry that gave him bad advice. There was much opposition to George III and his advisers in Great Britain, as well as in America. Indeed,

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it is hardly too much to say that so far as his reign was concerned, the Revolutionary War was fought on both sides of the ocean. America had many outspoken friends in Great Britain, some of them in high position. Great Britain needed money, and her king and his ministers declared that the colonies ought to bear their full share of the cost of wars that had been fought largely for their sake. Perhaps this was true, but the ways in which the government sought to collect that money were irritating and tactless, and such as greatly to weaken the loyalty of the colonies for the government of the mother country.

But back of all this was the fact that the colonies had grown in population and in pride, and in a desire to manage their own affairs. Smaller and smaller grew the proportion of men and women who had been born in England; an increasing majority of the people had been born on this side of the ocean, and did not possess the strong home ties of the original immigrants. They wanted to choose their own officers, conduct their own affairs, and develop their own industries. Doubtless they proclaimed their desires in annoying fashion at times, but their spirit was not at the outset one of rebellion.

The New England colonies were joined in a very loose federation to guard some matters of common interest, but these colonies and all the

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others were wholly independent of one another. They had no common assembly, no united voice. As friction between the colonies and the British Government grew, Committees of Correspondence were appointed by the several colonies to confer on measures of resistance against unjust taxes and upon other matters of common concern.

Out of this correspondence grew the Continental Congress. Its first meeting was in Philadelphia, commencing September 5, 1774. George Washington was one of seven members from Virginia. The Congress remained in session fifty-two days. It prepared a "Declaration of Rights," and a set of resolutions intended to boycott British goods that bore what the Congress regarded as unjust taxes.

If the government of Great Britain had been wise, it would have heeded the warning of this body; and if it had not granted all the demands made upon it, would have met them in such a spirit as to disarm further acts of approach to rebellion. But the British Government was not wise. It determined to send soldiers to Boston, which was regarded as the head and front of rebellion, to enforce the objectionable laws. This quartering of armed troops among them deepened colonial resentment and made violence almost inevitable.

But neither Washington nor the Congress was at the outset in favor of independence. Washing-

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ton's own letters of the period show how far he was from expecting or desiring anything so radical as the severing of relations between the colonies and the mother country.

Yet, seen from this distance, it is clear that at that stage Great Britain could not have held the colonies much longer. The feeling was growing daily that the colonies had interests which Britain did not and could not understand, and with which she did not sympathize.

It is a mistake to suppose that the colonists were wholly unprepared for war. Every farmer boy was trained to the use of the rifle. Militia drill was a feature of community life. The Indian wars had kept the possibility of war in the minds of the people. The mistake of Britain was in letting this temper turn from the French and Indians against Britain herself. When troops began to arrive in America, farmer boys began to drill, and towns began procuring powder and storing it in the top galleries of the meeting-houses.

It became known to the British officers in Boston that powder and other stores were collecting at Lexington and at Concord. A body of British troops marched out of Boston to destroy those stores. Paul Revere took his famous ride and gave his memorable warning. At Lexington the first blood in a long war was shed. Later in the same morning, April 19, 1775, there was a fight at Con-

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cord Bridge. Emerson, whose home was within sight of the spot, wrote out of a deep appreciation of the place and the event:

“By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April’s breeze unfurled;
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.”

Immediately men rushed toward Boston, and hemmed the British within the limits of that town. As yet there was scarcely an army, but the colonies began organizing regiments and sending them under their own commanders. There was determination not only to prevent the British soldiers from repeating their raid, but also to compell them to withdraw from Boston and from the colonies.

The Second Continental Congress convened on May 10, 1775. The place of meeting, as before, was Carpenter’s Hall, in Philadelphia. George Washington was there, and he wore his uniform. He was the only member who did so. It advertised his conviction that war had become inevitable. Indeed, war had already begun. On the very day the Congress assembled, Ethan Allen captured Ticonderoga, “in the name of the great Jehovah, and the Continental Congress.” General Henry Knox brought from there two hundred captured cannon to participate in the siege of Boston.

Not in New England only, but in New York

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and Pennsylvania, and in Virginia and the Carolinas and Georgia, and all the colonies between, there was mustering of troops and gathering of arms and munitions. Boston was soon hemmed in by twenty thousand Minute Men. It became necessary that there should be a commander. The Congress decided to elect such an officer. It chose George Washington and he accepted the responsibility.

Washington refused to receive any salary for his service but kept account of his expenses, and the repayment of these expenditures was all the remuneration he would accept. His letter to John Hancock, the President of Congress, said:

“MR. PRESIDENT: Though I am truly sensible of the high honor done me, in this appointment, yet I feel great distress, from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept my most cordial thanks for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

“But, lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I, this day, declare with utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.

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“As to pay, sir, I beg leave to assure the Congress, that, as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those, I doubt not, they will discharge; and that is all I desire.”

This is the letter he wrote to Martha Washington, informing her that instead of returning to Mount Vernon he was going to another war:

“MY DEAREST: I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defence of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it.

“You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times

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seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not pretend to intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment without exposing my character to such censures as would have reflected dishonor upon myself, and given pain to my friends. This, I am sure, could not, and ought not, to be pleasing to you, and must have lessened me considerably in my own esteem. I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall. I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid.

“As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling

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his temporal concerns while it is in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed, I have, since I came to this place (for I had not time to do it before I left home), got Colonel Pendleton to draft a will for me, by the directions I gave him, which I will now enclose. The provision made for you in case of my death, will, I hope, be agreeable.

“I shall add nothing more, as I have several letters to write, but to desire that you will remember me to your friends, and to assure you that I am, with the most unfeigned regard, my dear Patsy, your affectionate,

“GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

CHAPTER XIV

THE DELIVERANCE OF BOSTON

1776

GEORGE WASHINGTON was on his way to Boston again. It was nineteen years since his first and only previous visit to that city. Then he had gone to adjust a dispute about the command of troops sent against the French and had returned with Governor Shirley's authority to command the troops of other colonies than Virginia. Now he was going on an errand of vastly greater moment. He had told Martha truly that he had not sought this office, but he had sat in the Congress in uniform, and was the only member thus attired. He was not the only member who was a candidate for the position of commander-in-chief; the president of the Congress, John Hancock, greatly desired that honor. John Adams, who nominated George Washington, noted and wrote down the keen disappointment of Hancock when he heard Washington nominated and saw him elected. Washington was too ambitious, and too much inclined to a military life, not to have satisfaction in his election.

Moreover, Washington was sent forth with all

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the pomp and circumstance which the Congress could display. He left Philadelphia on Friday, June twenty-third, and the scene was so impressive that John Adams, who had nominated him, was almost jealous when he saw how great is the reward of military as compared with political glory. He wrote to his wife:

“I have this morning been out of town to accompany our generals, Washington, and Lee and Schuyler, a little way on their journey to the American camp before Boston. The three generals were all mounted on horseback, accompanied by Major Mifflin, who is gone in the character of aide-de-camp. All the delegates from the Massachusetts, with their servants and carriages, attended; many others of the delegates from the Congress; a large troop of light horse in their uniforms; many of the militia besides in theirs, music playing, etc., etc. Such is the pride and pomp of war. I, poor creature, worn out with scribbling for my bread and my liberty, low in spirits and weak in health, must leave others to wear the laurels which I have sown; others to eat the bread which I have earned; a common case.”

But testy, irritable John Adams need not have felt so badly about it. George Washington was riding with a rope around his neck, and the halter was drawn a little tighter than that around the neck of the men who merely scribbled for liberty.

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Washington did not ride far before he received good news. Fifteen miles out of Philadelphia he met a courier on his way to the Congress with tidings of the Battle of Bunker Hill. The battle had been fought less than a week before, on June seventeenth. The colonists had lost one hundred fifteen men killed, three hundred fifty wounded, thirty prisoners, and had had to retreat leaving the hill in possession of the British. But the British had lost two hundred twenty-six killed and eight hundred twenty-eight wounded. It had been a victory for the British, but a few more such victories would terminate British rule in America.

Washington rode on to the camp outside of Boston, happy in the reports that had come to him of the courage of the colonial troops. He was to learn that they had not all shown courage. He was to discover much to depress and exasperate him in the conduct of the men he was to command. But this did not trouble him as he rode forward. He was happy to know that militia could face British regulars and stand as long as their powder lasted. He learned some disquieting facts even before he reached Boston, and many others afterward.

He was to deal with incompetence, jealousy, laziness, cowardice and even treason, and there were times when it seemed to him that he had undertaken an impossible task. And the courage

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which his first reports of the battle of Bunker Hill might have seemed to imply belonged to all men fighting for the liberties of the American colonists he was to discover to be a very rare quality among fighting men. It is easy to talk about courage, but there is not very much of it in armies or anywhere else.

In due time General George Washington, having passed through New York with some anxiety—for the British authorities were in full control there and it was not certain what treatment a rebel officer would receive as he passed through—came, unmolested, to Cambridge, the headquarters of the colonial forces near Boston, and after all preliminaries had been duly attended to, on Monday, July 3, 1775, he unsheathed his sword under the historic old elm at Cambridge, and took command of the armies of the more or less united American colonies. General Artemas Ward, who had been in command, had organized a martial band of twenty-one drummers and twenty-one fifers, and these preceded General Washington as he rode out to take command. The army which he undertook to direct was composed wholly of men from the New England colonies. It was a little strange that an army from Puritan New England should have needed to send to Virginia for a leader, and there were many people who said so at the time, by no means excepting John Hancock. But both John Adams

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and Samuel Adams thought it highly important that a war, in which up to that time New England had so nearly monopolized, should have as its outstanding leader an officer from another colony. Moreover, General Ward was old, and if he was to be succeeded by a New England officer, there was no agreement who he should be. General Charles Lee greatly wanted the position, and kept near enough to Washington to borrow money from him, but there were those who did not trust Charles Lee, and their distrust proved to be grounded in wisdom.

For two months before Washington arrived in Cambridge to take command of the army, a military host had been besieging Boston. The town at that time was built on a peninsula, shaped like a pear, and with a long neck. Where this neck joined the town to the mainland strong fortifications were erected, and the colonial troops were spread in a half-moon through Dorchester, Roxbury, Cambridge and on to Winter Hill. It was not easy for the British soldiers in the city to obtain food. People who lived in the city, also, were in some discomfort, but those who were patriotic suffered patiently, for, if the siege was successful the British would have to give up their possession of the town.

As it was not easy to secure any food across the neck of Boston, the British had to depend on

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their boats, but this, also, became difficult and dangerous for the fishermen along the shores near Boston harbor organized themselves into boat-crews and made attacks on the British boats. It seemed at first as though Washington faced a rather easy task.

But it was not easy. The British held the town and they had the forts in the harbor. They also had ships. They continued to obtain food all that summer and fall and winter. Washington knew very well that he must not try to capture Boston by any such rash act as leading his troops into the city. He had choice of two courses, strategy or patient waiting. He waited.

An idle army is difficult to control. It is all the harder if that army has been accustomed to an active life. The men whom Washington commanded had rushed to arms after Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill, assured that a few weeks of fighting would end the war. They learned, and were still to learn, that fighting is a very small part of war. They grew restless and impatient.

In an idle army there is much of gossip, much of scandal, much of jealousy and intrigue. False rumors spring up and go far before they are found to be false. The wildest tales of what the general intends to do, and what the enemy is planning to do get afloat. When the days go by and these

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things are not done, the soldiers settle down listlessly and doubt if anything ever is to be done, or they grow fretful and insubordinate.

It is not easy to govern the moral conduct of soldiers in times of idleness. Drinking, gambling, profanity and other forms of immorality abound. Disease becomes common. A marching army is a healthy army, but an army waiting idly for something to happen is not likely to protect the health of the soldiers.

Officers had been hastily chosen. Not all of them were sober, intelligent and competent men. Some of the commissions which were given to Washington to deliver seemed to him so unsuitable that he held them for some time before he passed them over to the men they named.

The capture of Ticonderoga had been so simple and easy, it gave a wrong impression to the colonial soldiers. They thought all they had to do was to have a short quick battle, capture the British and drive them out of America. But Great Britain was now thoroughly aroused. Her first idea that a small force of well-trained regular soldiers would put to flight the unorganized mob of colonial militia had proved a mistake. Boston was held by a strong force, in a city comparatively easy of defense.

It was a disappointing summer and autumn, and a dreary winter both inside the city and out. There

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was no fighting worth the mention. Both sides waited. But Washington was gradually getting his force organized, and making an army out of a mob. He was learning how to handle large bodies of men, and the men were learning something about George Washington. He made mistakes, as all generals do, but he saw plainly that if he could hold the British inside of Boston, and not let them secure plentiful supplies, they would finally have to give up the city. He knew, also, that while it would be folly for him to make a land attack upon them, it would be equally foolish for them to try to break through his lines. So he waited.

When Washington took command at Cambridge he expressed to Martha the hope that he would return to her in the fall. In like expectation of brief conquest have men ever rushed into war. But fall came and passed and he had no opportunity to go to Mount Vernon or anywhere else. He grew anxious about Martha, and wrote that he feared for her safety at Mount Vernon. He thought the way to that plantation was open both by land and water, and she might be captured and carried away. He advised her to leave and go to a place better protected. She was disinclined to do so, but at length consented. She rode away a few miles, stayed one night and went back to look after her home, her dairy and her kitchen.

There were those who said she was a Tory at

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heart. A slander like to this was long believed concerning Mrs. Lincoln. In neither case was it true. While little Martha Washington bothered her head less than Mary Lincoln about politics, she was thoroughly loyal to the colonial cause.

In the winter of 1775-1776 Washington established his headquarters in the Craigie house at Cambridge, afterward and still famous as the home of Henry W. Longfellow. Washington sent for Martha to be with him there. So one autumn day the Washington coach drove up to the door at Mount Vernon, and Martha, her baggage duly cared for, descended the stair and took a lingering look about her. She was going on a long journey, the first of her life. The coach had four horses, curried till they shone. She had postillions in livery of white with scarlet trimmings, and outriders on horseback at the wheel. The horn blew, the whip cracked, and the coach was off.

They rode to Alexandria, which was the farthest north she had ever been, and her longest journeys south had been to Williamsburg. Soon she lost sight of the last familiar object. The only recognizable objects she could see were the servants and the horses, and the servants hardly looked familiar, for their livery with the Washington arms and the silver buckles was new.

In due time they came to Philadelphia. She had been greeted all along the way with almost royal

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honors, but at Philadelphia there was a celebration worth a page of history. She was met by details of cavalry and infantry, and escorted with pomp and circumstance into the drab but really very gay Quaker city. A state ball had been prepared for "Lady Washington" as they called her. The title sounded very grand to the little woman in her big coach. And it was then and there that she had to meet the first clash of opinion among those who wished to do her honor. For all the high society of Philadelphia wanted to make a gay event of her visit. But John Hancock and Samuel Adams and other Puritan members of the Continental Congress then in session formed a committee and waited upon Lady Washington. They expressed their sincere desire to show her ladyship all due honor, but represented that an affair of gaiety, such as had been proposed, was not in harmony with the solemn situation of the colonial cause. Her own husband was in the field, exposed to danger, and men were risking their lives for a sacred cause. Frivolity was not for an hour like this. So Philadelphia asked for a party, and Boston opposed it, and little Martha Washington had to decide.

She dearly loved to dance, but she replied that "the desires of the Committee were agreeable to her own." There was, therefore, no ball, and Lady Washington, wearied with her journey of four

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hundred fifty miles, sank her tired little head in a deep pillow, and went to sleep, wishing just a little that she might have shown her fine apparel in an event such as that would have been. But her decision was tactful and gave satisfaction.

Moreover, she did not lack for honor. Cannon boomed, bells rang, and addresses of welcome were delivered to the appreciative little woman, and she would have enjoyed happiness complete had her husband been there to share it with her.

On she went across the Hudson and so to Boston, and there the army gave her another welcome. The coach-and-four wheeled up in front of the Craigie mansion, and the lady of the commander-in-chief descended. Lady Washington was attired, as became the wife of the commander-in-chief, in the garments of the latest style; that is, in garments such as had been in style in London prior to April 19, 1775.

Some of Washington's generals had written to their wives inviting them to headquarters. The wife of General Greene met Lady Washington in Philadelphia and came on with her. The wife of General Knox soon arrived. Other officers had visits from the ladies they loved. The winter at Cambridge was not destitute of the warmth and light that dwell in woman's eyes.

Jack Custis came with Martha, and so did his girl-wife, Nellie Calvert Custis. The young folks

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had a merry winter. Even Washington found willing relaxation from his cares in the dance.

It was well they had their pleasure while they could. Their expectation that the war would soon be over was not fulfilled. The winter wore away as it does in Boston, reluctantly, and with many changes of its mind. The spring came, but it had a wintry disposition.

When the spring campaign began, Mrs. Washington left Cambridge. She did not at once return to Mount Vernon. She stopped in Philadelphia, and it was then she was inoculated. If she was to spend any portion of the year about the camps, where smallpox was liable at any time to become epidemic, she ought to be inoculated. So in Philadelphia, in May, she "had the smallpox favorably" at the hand of Dr. John Morgan. She had had a touch of the court life that belongs to the camp, and she and Washington determined that she should visit him whenever he was in winter quarters suitable and accommodations were to be had. But they did not at the outset expect that there would be another winter of it. There were many winters, to their discontent and sorrow.

The Revolutionary War broke out before the colonies had either an army or a government. The battles of Lexington and Concord took place three weeks before the assembling of the Second Continental Congress. That Congress could pass res-



Lady Washington Visits Camp

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olutions, but it could not compel obedience to any demand that it made. Although it endeavored to assist Washington support his army, its interference sometimes embarrassed him, and the policy of short enlistments which the Congress favored he believed to be almost hopeless.

When he assumed command, the army investing Boston numbered seventeen thousand men, largely from Massachusetts and Connecticut. But a large proportion of his force was always ineffective, and the very short terms of enlistment made military progress almost impossible. In a letter to the president of Congress, dated November 28, 1775, he said:

“I am sorry to be necessitated to mention to you the egregious want of public spirit which reigns here. Instead of pressing to be engaged in the cause of their country, which I vainly flattered myself would be the case, I find we are likely to be deserted in a most critical time. The Connecticut troops, upon whom I reckoned, are as backward, indeed, if possible, more so than the people of this colony.”

In a private letter to Joseph Reed of the same date:

“Such a dearth of public spirit and such want of virtue, such stock-jobbing and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another in this great change of military arrange-

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ment I never saw before, and pray God's mercy that I may never be witness again. What will be the end of the maneuvers is beyond my scan. I tremble at the prospect."

And in a letter to the Congress:

"A soldier reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds that it is of no more importance to him than to others. The officer makes you the same reply, with the further remark that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, where every member of the community is equally interested and benefited by his labors. The few, therefore, who act upon principles of disinterestedness, comparatively speaking, are no more than a drop in the ocean."

Washington thus described the condition of his army at the beginning of 1776:

"Search the volumes of history through, and I much question whether a case similar to ours is to be found, namely, to maintain a post against the flower of the British troops for six months together, without powder, and then to have one army disbanded and another to be raised within the same distance of a reinforced enemy. It is too much to attempt. What may be the final issue of the last maneuver time only can unfold. I wish this month was well over our heads. The same

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desire of retiring into a chimney corner seized the troops of New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, as soon as their times expired, as had wrought upon those of Connecticut, notwithstanding many of them made a tender of their services to continue till the lines could be sufficiently strengthened. We are now left with a good deal less than half raised regiments and about 5,000 militia, who only stand engaged till the middle of this month, when, according to custom, they will depart, let the necessity of their stay be ever so urgent. Though for more than two months past I had scarcely emerged from one difficulty before I have been plunged into another."

We know now what George Washington did not know, that England's army was not well handled. For a nation with such important interests her army was not large and many of her soldiers had no great interest in fighting against the colonies. Moreover, her navy did not begin to render the service which an effective fleet might have rendered in such a war. To have blockaded the whole coast would not have seemed a vast undertaking. War is largely made up of blunders.

As the winter neared its end, Washington's policy of what Woodrow Wilson called "watchful waiting" changed. He determined upon an important movement.

The peninsula on which Boston is built is approached on either side by land that rises to a

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considerable height and is separated from Boston proper by intervening water. On one side is Charlestown and on the other are South Boston and Dorchester. The plan of the battle of Bunker Hill was a good one. It was to erect a fortification on one of these elevations in such fashion that from it Boston and the neck of its peninsula would be exposed to fire from across the narrow strip of water. Bunker Hill was now in possession of the British. But the hill on the opposite side, Dorchester Heights, was not so occupied. Washington determined to fortify this elevation, and he did it so quickly, so effectively, that, before his plan was discovered and interfered with, his guns commanded the city and the nearer forts in the harbor.

There was nothing for the British to do but to fight at great disadvantage, because the narrow neck did not permit a long assaulting line, or to evacuate Boston. They did the latter.

Lord Howe, who commanded the British troops, sent a message to Washington offering to withdraw, and not to harm the city, if Washington would permit his troops to depart without firing upon them. It was a fair offer, and Washington accepted it. Howe asked also that he be permitted to take with him those inhabitants of Boston who had remained loyal to Great Britain and who feared punishment if they remained. To this also Washington consented.

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On March 17, 1776, the British army, numbering with the men of the fleet not quite eleven thousand, embarked in one hundred twenty transports for Halifax. They left behind two hundred fifty cannon, about half of which were serviceable. New England was free from the tramp of an invading army. The last British soldier had departed. Boston that had waited wearily all winter for relief, welcomed its deliverers and their commander.

If Washington was not a great general when he took command of the colonial troops in Cambridge on the third day of July, 1775, he certainly had become a great general by the seventeenth of March following. This is what he had accomplished: He had made an army out of a rabble. He had invested Boston so closely that the British troops within it were in danger of starving. He had extended his lines to the side of the city over against Bunker Hill, and there on an eminence opposite to the scene of that earlier battle he had erected a fort by night, from which he could command the site of the harbor, and from this redoubt, he compelled the evacuation of Boston. He saved his own powder and he more than doubled his supplies by those which he captured from the British. He added to the number of his cannon; for even those from which the British had broken the trunnions were repaired by Paul Revere. He thus brought to a successful close the first year of the

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war, and had by this time an army of twenty-one thousand men, of whom only two thousand were sick, and from whom he had lost less than twenty men in a campaign that resulted in the capture of the most important city in America with all its forts and armament. It was a great day for George Washington and for America when he marched his victorious force, no longer a mob but an army, over Boston Neck and along the street that since has borne his name. It was a great day for America; a day of solemn and religious rejoicing, and when on the following Sabbath George Washington attended divine worship it was to hear a sermon from the text:

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” (Isaiah 33:20.)

CHAPTER XV

LIFE, FORTUNE AND SACRED HONOR

1776

THE colonies had been at war more than a year, and no one could be quite sure what they were fighting for. They had suffered certain abuses from the British Government, and had petitioned and protested, and now were fighting, but just what they now intended to do they had not said and did not know. Washington had said, in 1775, that they were not fighting for independence. Other leaders said the same. They still counted England the mother country, and they wanted her to continue to be such.

But every bullet and bayonet made it more certain that the old relation could not be restored. The colonies had no existence as a nation; they were hardly even rebels. What were they, and what were they fighting for?

When Washington rode from Philadelphia through New York to take command of the troops around Boston, he expressed the sincere hope for a reconciliation with Great Britain. He was ready to go the full length of the declaration of the Con-

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gress, that it was the "fondest wish of every American soul" to secure "an accommodation with our Mother Country." To that end he pledged his every exertion. But every day he spent with an army face to face with the armed forces of Great Britain made the chances of such an accommodation more remote. No one saw this fact more clearly than Washington. Few men in the colonies had so much to risk as Washington had then at stake. An unsuccessful war against Great Britain, whether it cost few lives or many, would cost a rich man such as Washington his home, his estates, his official position, and quite possibly his life.

The Congress, in session in Philadelphia in the spring and early summer of 1776, was earnestly discussing the question of independence. There were, of course, a number of delegates who favored it, but we can not wonder that to many it seemed a terrible leap into the unknown, a thing to be avoided if it could be by any reasonable possibility of concession. Samuel Adams, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and others favored an immediate severing of political relations with Great Britain, but half the members of Congress thought otherwise. We can not wonder.

While this matter was hanging in the balance, George Washington himself visited Philadelphia. There is no record of what he said there, but his

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visit had a marked effect. His letters of the period show that he was thoroughly committed to the principle of independence, and his influence in Philadelphia greatly strengthened the movement in favor of it.

The real date of the vote adopting the Declaration of Independence was July 2, 1776. It was ordered engrossed on July nineteenth. The first signatures were on August second, and the last ones some months later. These dates are to be recorded in the interests of accuracy, but the real date after all, is that on which the fact was announced that the Declaration of Independence had been adopted. No pedantic insistence on the day of the actual voting need disturb us. The nation's birthday is July 4, 1776. Since then no one has had much doubt what the Revolution was about.

The Declaration of Independence is a noble and dignified document. It was written, and mainly composed, by Thomas Jefferson, but its adoption was largely due to the eloquent advocacy of John Adams. It set forth in forthright fashion the grievances of the colonies at the hands of the British Government. It charged, and very rightly, the king with responsibility for these wrongs. It told in truthful manner how much and how long the colonies had endured. This was done in deference to "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind." It declared that these colonies are, and

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of right ought to be, free and independent states. Those who voted for this Declaration knew the risks they ran. They said to one another, grimly, "If we don't hang together, we shall hang separately." Depending on God for their success, and appealing to Him for the rectitude of their intentions, they pledged, in support of their Declaration, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

Many people in the colonies were horrified. To the timid it seemed a tempting of the fates. The people of the colonies did not as a rule hate England. It was with real sorrow that many of them saw the ties severed that had united the colonies from the beginning to the mother country. But there are few sensible people who now doubt the wisdom or the justice of the action taken at Philadelphia, and those who speak lightly of the courageous act of those whose vote and signature made us a free country need not call from us any present comment.

Whoever doubted the rectitude of the decision of the colonies to be free, George Washington did not. A conservative and an aristocrat as he was by nature and by his social and financial condition, his heart was wholly committed to the cause of American liberty. He was not pushed into the movement by more radical minds. He went into it whole-heartedly, believing that it was a righteous cause, and to it he gave the full measure of his ardent support.

CHAPTER XVI

DEFEAT AND RETREAT

1776

WHEN George Washington went to Philadelphia to urge the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, he went with his eyes open. He knew what kind of army he had, and was well aware that man for man his force was inferior to the disciplined armies of Lord Howe. He cherished no illusion about Howe's withdrawal from Boston to Halifax; he must fight Howe again, and under circumstances where he could not expect to starve Howe into acceptance of his conditions. If he had any doubt about the wisdom of independence, he knew the facts that might have seemed to justify that doubt.

On July 5, 1776, the very next day after the official publication of the Declaration of Independence, Lord Howe came back. He had sailed from Halifax, June tenth, and his twenty square-rigged vessels dropped anchor in New York harbor just in time to hear the ringing of bells announcing that the colonies had determined to fight till they were free. Howe had with him nine thousand two hundred men, and more were to come.

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Washington had expected that Howe would return, and had guessed that he would not go back to Boston. New York was a much more central point for a military base, and Washington prepared to meet Howe there. Washington knew that forty thousand was about the limit of troops that Great Britain could spare for use in America, and he had driven an army numbering more than a quarter of that total from Boston. It was Washington's policy to make it difficult for the British to land, to attack them wherever he could discover a weak point in their formation, and to keep his own army as nearly as possible ready for its larger battles on the defensive.

He was correct in his estimates of possible British strength, but he did not know and was soon to learn, that Britain was planning to employ seventeen thousand German troops from Hesse Cassal. These were mercenaries, impressed by their petty princes, and hired out to Britain for a fight which did not concern themselves.

This strengthened the British army, but it divided sentiment in Britain. Some prominent men who believed that the colonies were wrong in their rebellion, did not believe in hiring foreign mercenaries to shoot down the kinsmen of the British people.

By the time Lord Howe had landed all his troops, he had on Staten Island 31,625 men. It

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was, indeed, a formidable army which Washington faced. He was not strong enough to oppose such an army in open battle where conditions were equal as to the terrain, but unequal as to military strength.

What followed was a series of sorrowful defeats and retreats. In the battle of Long Island, Washington's army suffered a severe repulse. Battles followed at Harlem Heights and at White Plains, and with little that could give hope to the colonists. Washington had two forts on opposite sides of the Hudson River, and these, Fort Washington and Fort Lee, were captured by Howe's army. The whole autumn was a series of depressing events. Washington retreated into New Jersey, leaving Howe in undisputed possession of New York, and with the British and Hessians cautiously following Washington's army into New Jersey.

Winter came on, and Washington decided upon Morristown, New Jersey, as his base and headquarters. He drew up his army in such manner as to dispute the advance of the British troops toward Philadelphia, which he knew they hoped to possess. He caused light entrenchments to be thrown up at fords and ferries of the Delaware River to make it difficult for the enemy to cross. His army had suffered repeated defeat and was sadly weakened, but his spirit was still unconquered.

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Almost any one can be complacent when success comes steadily toward him, and that is one of the dangers of success that is cheaply won. But George Washington was brave enough and calm enough to endure a long series of defeats, and still be sure of the final triumph of his cause, because he believed with all his heart that his cause was right.

While Washington was in the midst of these disappointments, he was repeatedly approached with suggestions that it was not too late to obtain a full pardon for what had been done by way of rebellion against Great Britain, and that substantial rewards were waiting for him if he would stop the war. Washington was capable of mighty anger, and these were among the times when he used it. No fear of punishment, no hope of reward, no uncertainty about the cause or the result for which he was fighting could influence George Washington when he believed, as with all his heart he did believe, that he was fighting for the freedom of his nation.

CHAPTER XVII

TRENTON AND PRINCETON

1776-1777

WHEN George Washington began his career as a soldier, he displayed great rashness. Experience both with the French and Indians and later in the Revolution made him very cautious. He defeated the British quite as much by retreating as he did by fighting. There is wisdom in the old quatrain:

“In all the art of war no feat
Is better than a wise retreat;
For he who fights and runs away
May live to fight another day.”

Old soldiers have no illusions about retreating. They fire and fall back and fire again, leading the enemy farther and farther from their base, and standing their ground only when they are confident they can hold it; while raw troops are often shot to pieces by their reckless courage. Washington knew when it was best to retreat, and he had much retreating to do.

But he did not always retreat, and he sometimes

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surprised his adversaries when they expected that he would continue to fall back before them.

In the winter of 1776-1777, when Washington was in winter quarters, and no severe fighting was expected, he chose a favorable moment for a brilliant offensive.

Trenton was held by a Hessian force numbering 1,540 men. They were commanded by a German officer, Colonel Rahl. Washington guessed that they would be celebrating Christmas with all the customary festivity. He fixed upon that night as the time for his attack.

The Delaware River was filled with cakes of floating ice. Boats attempting to cross would find their undertaking far from easy. But Washington determined not only to send as many men across as the boats he had would permit, but to go himself and lead the attack. His plans were laid with great caution and with skill, and they worked well.

Washington succeeded in getting two thousand four hundred men across the Delaware River that Christmas night. His boatmen were fishermen from Gloucester and Marblehead. It was bitter cold, and sleet cut the faces of the men on the river and on the march beyond. Nine miles they had to tramp after they left their boats, and it was a hard march, freezing cold, and with pitiless sleet. General Sullivan sent word to Washington that the guns of his soldiers were wet with the snow and



The Nine-mile March to Trenton

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could not be fired. Washington sent back the message that the men should depend on their bayonets.

It was an all-night adventure. It had taken long to convey all the men over the river, and the march had been slow. It was eight o'clock in the morning, and broad daylight, when Washington's force reached Trenton. Weary as were the men, they took courage and new vigor as they approached the place they were to attack. There had been no uncertainty in the plan, no mistake about the roads. The attack was timed in such manner that the colonials seemed to have come from everywhere. There was no time to prepare for them, no place to run away from them. The brilliant strategy of Washington proved completely successful.

The Hessian troops in Trenton had and were having a hilarious Christmas celebration. They feasted and they drank, and they felt no sense of fear. It was not to be supposed that Washington would undertake anything so futile as an attack upon them. So they forgot the enemy, and, remembering the festive celebrations which they had enjoyed in Germany, ate, drank and were merry.

Suddenly there was a cry of battle. The Hessians were attacked from different sides, by a force that had been skilfully deployed on roads that converged at the Hessian camp. The Hessian commander, surprised, vainly attempted to rally his men. Resistance was hopeless.

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Washington lost that night two men killed, and three wounded. But the Hessians lost their commander and forty-one enlisted men. Washington captured thirty officers and more than a thousand men. The battle lasted less than an hour.

But Washington could not remain there. He was too near the heavy forces of Lord Howe. He must put the Delaware between him and pursuit. The cold weary soldiers must recross the Delaware and take with them a thousand prisoners, and their captured cannon, and other arms and munitions, and all must be done quickly.

Back to the river they marched through the storm. Again they were in their boats and amid the floating ice. But they faced the biting wind with new warmth in their hearts. They had faced the winter, the river, the enemy and had won a brilliant victory. The year 1776, which brought much of sorrow and distress, ended with a battle so unexpected, so well planned, so successful, as to put new faith into those who were fighting for liberty.

The loss of a battle, and of a thousand Hessian prisoners, was a sad disappointment to the British, and Lord Howe felt that it would not be well to let the case remain in that situation. He sent out Lord Cornwallis with seven thousand experienced troops, to recover the loss and administer a stern rebuke to George Washington.

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But Cornwallis found Washington's army drawn up on the farther shore of the Assunpink River. He attacked, was repulsed, and he hesitated about another attack. He thought well to consider the matter overnight, and he intended to bring on a battle in the morning. That night the weather turned cold, and the ground was hard enough to move artillery. Washington arranged to keep his camp-fires burning while he completely changed his front, and, moving in a circuitous route and traveling sixteen miles to attain the distance of ten, he encountered a section of the rear of the British army at Princeton, and again won a victory. His loss here was heavier than at Trenton, and the advantage less marked; but it destroyed all hope of Cornwallis that he could exterminate the army of Washington in the swift and decisive manner in which he had hoped to accomplish that result.

With these two brilliant movements, Washington drew aside to Morristown, and remained in winter quarters. It is said that Frederick the Great declared that this campaign, including Trenton and Princeton, was one of the most notable in military history. It proved anew the generalship of Washington, and it greatly cheered the hearts of those who fought for the colonial cause.

CHAPTER XVIII

VALLEY FORGE TO YORKTOWN

1777-1781

THE season that followed the successes at Trenton and Princeton brought little to cheer the colonial cause. While Washington's army looked formidable on paper, it was largely composed of men just arrived and raw, or men just about to depart and more eager to get home than to fight. Congress was almost helpless and not always wise. Washington had much occasion for disappointment and sorrow.

The thing that hurt him most was the jealousy and bickering of his officers. Many of them believed themselves to be greater men than Washington, and there were plots and schemes not only disloyal to him but almost treasonable to the cause. These things were harder to bear than the open hostility of the enemy, for Washington knew that he had to face that.

Lord Howe was greatly desirous of giving to Washington's army a thorough defeat. He had two reasons for this. In the first place, he wanted to capture Philadelphia, which was the colonial

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capital, and Washington had been keeping his army between that city and New York. In the second place, he wanted liberty to send his own army northward to assist General Burgoyne, who was preparing for a battle in that direction. He decided that there might be time to defeat Washington before Burgoyne needed him, and he marched south in June of 1777. But Washington, striking from Morristown, threatened his flank and delayed Howe. Then Washington took his stand at the fords of Brandywine Creek. He had kept Howe away from Burgoyne all summer. The battle of Brandywine was fought September eleventh, and Washington was defeated. The battle of Germantown did nothing to redeem the colonial fortunes. Lord Howe occupied Philadelphia. But he was not able to return north and assist Burgoyne. The battle of Saratoga was fought and Burgoyne was defeated. On October seventeenth his army surrendered to General Gates.

General Horatio Gates was far from being a great general, and if he was a man of honor he did much to justify the opposite opinion of him. But it fell to his good fortune to receive the capitulation of "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne, whose army suffered a series of reverses and surrendered October 17, 1777. But it was Benedict Arnold rather than Horatio Gates who compelled the surrender of Burgoyne. In a larger sense, however,

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it was George Washington; for it was he who made it impossible for Howe to send reinforcements to Burgoyne in his extremity. And Gates had need of the warning as he went south to new opportunities, which did not add to his fame or his reputation for honor, "Take heed lest your northern laurels turn to southern willows." Gates did not prove a good soldier or a worthy man.

Lord Howe had paid a high price for his conquest of Philadelphia, and he had to pay yet again. His winter in that city, largely given up to high living, demoralized his troops. Franklin truly said, "Lord Howe has not taken Philadelphia so much as Philadelphia has taken Lord Howe." But that at the time was little comfort to Washington and his army. While Howe was feasting at Philadelphia, Washington and his almost naked men were shivering at Valley Forge. The memories of those cheerless months sank deep into the hearts of the discouraged army. The tradition of Washington's prayer of sorrowful supplication has found an imperishable place in American thought.

Spring came, and with it great news. There had been with Washington a young French soldier named Lafayette. In some respects he had been an embarrassment, for he was young and had no knowledge of the English language, but he had returned to France at the time that France and England went to war, and had persuaded

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French officials to tell the king that his best way to defeat Britain was to aid the colonies. The French king had no love for America, but he believed that this proposal was sensible, and he decided to recognize the colonial cause and to aid it. On May 7, 1778, Washington's army was drawn up at a general parade, and the chaplains of the several regiments read a treaty in which France joined with the colonies in their struggle for independence. It was a day of great rejoicing after a sorrowful and disheartening winter.

The battle of Monmouth occurred June 28, 1778. Washington planned it well, and it was successful. Nevertheless, its success was diminished, and the victory was almost lost, by the cowardice or treachery of General Charles Lee. He, who had been an English officer, and whose motive for the desertion of his native country was probably none too unselfish, was believed to be the greatest general in the American army, and he was one of Washington's severest critics. His was to have been an important part in the battle of Monmouth, but when Washington came upon that part of the field where Lee's command was placed, he found that general and his troops in disorderly retreat.

There can be no doubt that Washington was furiously angry. What he said to Lee was not recorded in the court-martial. Lee did not charge that Washington swore, though that has been gen-

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erally believed. Lee wrote a letter to Washington protesting against the language which Washington had addressed to him, implying that he was guilty either of disobedience or of lack of courage. Washington answered:

“I received your letter, expressed, as I conceive, in terms highly improper. I am not conscious of any very singular expressions at the time of my meeting you as you intimate. What I recollect to have said was dictated by duty and warranted by the occasion.”

Just what language Washington thought was “warranted by the occasion” when he found a victory almost lost through Lee’s unsoldierly conduct, and brave men were dying with everything they were dying to accomplish jeopardized by his cowardice, we may not know. We shall have to trust that matter to the judgment of George Washington. He was a reasonably good judge of what it was best to say under such circumstances, and he probably said it. What he said, we do not know. The court-martial appears to have thought that his words were well chosen.

When Washington first went to Morristown the accommodations were so limited he did not send for Mrs. Washington, but she arrived about the middle of March, 1777, and was with him for a little time in the Arnold Tavern. It was her first visit to New

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Jersey, and she had as pleasant a time as was possible under the circumstances, but matters had become much more serious than they seemed in Cambridge. The summer of 1777 she spent in Mount Vernon, and she went to her husband when he was in Valley Forge. When some ladies of distinction called on her, dressed in their best frocks, they found her in "a speckled apron, knitting socks." After having greeted them, she resumed her knitting. While she was there she knit, darned, patched and otherwise repaired the clothing of officers, and made shirts for the soldiers who were much in need.

She was with Washington again in Philadelphia in 1779, and again on the banks of the Hudson a year later. She had become a traveler, and she loyally kept as near to her husband in times of military inactivity as the conditions of war permitted.

We have one interesting little picture of a merry evening at Morristown, when there was a dance. Such festivities were not as common then as they had been before the war grew so serious. But Washington was in the mood for dancing and so were some of the others. General and Mrs. Greene were there, and Mrs. Greene was an enthusiastic dancer, a partner after George Washington's own heart. The dance developed into an endurance test, and General Greene recorded in his diary:

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"We had a little dance at my quarters a few evenings since. His Excellency and Mrs. Greene danced upwards of three hours without once sitting down."

It would have been interesting to see His Excellency and Mrs. Greene in this long dance, with General Greene and Lady Washington as admiring spectators.

And still the war dragged on. There were treasons, stratagems and spoils. There were victories that were half defeats, and defeats that had in them no element of victory. The assistance of France was a help but it was none too generous or constant. Much of the time France had other interests to serve. The first division of the French army to reach America was that sent by Louis XVI under Count Rochambeau, which landed at Newport, Rhode Island, July 20, 1780. It had great moral effect. General Clinton, in command of the British in New York, wrote to London:

"At this new epoch of the war, when a foreign foe has already landed, and an addition to it is expected, I owe it to my country, and I must in justice say, to my own fame, to declare to your lordship that I become every day more sensible of the utter impossibility of prosecuting the war in this country without reinforcements. We are, by some thousands, too weak to subdue the rebellion."

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However, he obtained reinforcements, and while the rebellion continued, the British were not driven out or decisively beaten. The British continued to win the battles, though they were steadily losing the war.

For a good while the fighting was largely around New York, and even in New England along the shore of Long Island Sound. Washington's headquarters were removed from New Jersey and were located near the Hudson. It seemed likely that the end of the war would occur there.

But there was no prospect that it would end soon, or very happily. The troops who had been restless became almost mutinous. They were ill fed, badly clothed and often unpaid. The first enthusiasm was long since spent. The colonies were drained of men and money and there seemed no progress. Suddenly the theater of war shifted, and most unexpectedly. So long had the fighting been in the north, it was unexpected news that Washington had left the vicinity of New York and was already far on his way to Virginia.

The Yorktown campaign was an inspiration. Lord Cornwallis was in the south, hoping not only to secure supplies, but to recruit his army from the loyalists in that region. A detachment of his army suffered sad defeat at King's Mountain, and turned toward the coast. There Lafayette was in pursuit, and there was word that a powerful

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French fleet under Count de Grasse would join in the advance against the army of Cornwallis.

Washington and Rochambeau joined forces against the British, and the French fleet rendered brief but effective help. Cornwallis was hemmed in at the tip of the peninsula, and the ships shut him out from escape by sea. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered his army, consisting of more than seven thousand men, with about nine hundred sailors and marines. He gave up also seventy-five brass cannon and sixty-nine iron guns.

It was a glorious triumph. The French took over the captured British ships, but the troops were surrendered to the Americans.

George Washington ordered his soldiers to show the captured British all possible kindness, and he himself treated Cornwallis with very great consideration. When Cornwallis, at a banquet, felt it his duty to drink a toast "To the King," Washington added, "of England," and expressed courteously the hope that the king would thereafter confine his rule to his own side of the ocean.

CHAPTER XIX

TREACHERY AND SPITE

WE MUST not close this account of Washington's career as the commanding general of the Revolution without reminding ourselves that he met other misfortunes and trials than those of the battlefield. War develops some fine traits in human character, including courage and generosity and willingness to suffer privation for a great ideal. It also brings out every form of meanness and immorality. War is not only an evil in itself; it fosters every other kind of evil. Washington faced a hundred perils in the eight long years of the Revolutionary struggle. He met and endured the dangers of battle, disease and privation. These were not light matters; but the hardest hostilities which he faced were those of men who were of his own army, whose ambition, backbiting and treachery made his service seem one long torture. There is no reason why we should now recall these matters in detail, but we ought to remember that the greatness and unselfishness of Washington did not save him from these unhappy experiences.

One of his brigadier-generals, Thomas Conway by name, was an Irishman and a soldier of for-

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tune, who, after fighting for the French, had come to the colonies where he had better chance of promotion. He was a jolly talkative man, and made warm friends. During the terrible winter at Valley Forge, influenced by men who made a tool of him, he set to work to destroy the influence of Washington, and wrote a letter to General Gates in which he said:

“Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak General and bad counsellors would have ruined it.”

This letter fell into Washington's hands, and he immediately informed Conway that he had it. But Washington did not publish the fact that he had this knowledge, nor did he attempt to discharge Conway. Indeed, he knew that not only in the army but in the Congress were many who sympathized with the insubordinate Irishman. It was not long before the Congress promoted Conway, making him a major-general and inspector-general of the army. This was almost an insult to Washington on the part of Congress, and Conway rather invited a clash by writing to his general:

“If my appointment is productive of any inconvenience, or otherwise disagreeable to your Excellency, as I neither applied for it nor solicited for this place, I am very ready to return to France.”

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General Conway told what was not true when he said that he had not applied for the place; he had sought it very eagerly. But Washington did not accuse him, nor did he come to open war with Conway. If he had sent that officer back to France, there would have been a protest that might have split the army, and Washington would have been accused of jealousy. Washington let Conway alone. Conway had many friends, and it seemed at one time that he might displace Washington, but his plan did not succeed. He fought a duel with another American officer, and, being wounded and thinking he was about to die, he wrote to Washington:

“My career will soon be over, therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration and esteem of these states, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.”

He did not die, but when he recovered he left the colonies and went to France, and so removed himself from the plot which soon died its own death.

Conway chose discreetly when he selected Gates as his correspondent. Gates had won an easy victory over Burgoyne, and received credit for other men's courage. A reputation based on other men's achievements is a peril. Gates was not a great

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enough man to sustain the reputation which came to him so nearly unearned. He easily persuaded himself that he was the really great general of the war, and that the armies needed his leadership. Unfortunately, there were others who shared his opinions. A considerable group of officers contrasted the brilliant success of the Saratoga campaign with the methods employed by Washington, and made comparisons extremely unfavorable to Washington. Gates, they said, marched forward, fought and won, and compelled the surrender of Burgoyne's entire army, while Washington went from one retreat to another, and when he fought quite often lost. Washington knew of this criticism, and bore it patiently. Benedict Arnold also knew of it, and chafed under it.

While we are saying these things, it ought in justice to be remembered that Arnold's provocation had been very great. He had shown himself a man of unusual courage, but had seen five officers who were his juniors promoted over him. He was a veteran of the French and Indian War, and was thoroughly displeased that the colonies, who had hardly done fighting the French, should now be accepting the thoroughly selfish services of the French Government against the English, who, even though we were at war with them, were our kinsmen. Smarting under a long cherished sense of wrong, he came through the battle of Saratoga,

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severely wounded and knew that his valor had won the victory, while Gates, who was hardly in the fight at all, appropriated all the glory. But all this did not justify Arnold's wicked act in betraying his country, and his conduct when he suffered injustice was very different from that of Washington.

Gates was strutting under the laurels that belonged to Arnold. These two men, Washington and Arnold, both injured by Gates, acted very differently. Arnold fretted and rebelled and became a traitor, while Washington preserved his dignity and self-control and continued to serve the country that did not always appreciate him. Many officers were saying that if Gates were at the head of the army, the war would soon end. Gates did not try to change their opinion. His readiness to stab at the reputation of Washington and to undermine his influence was a sore trial to the commanding general. But Washington bore all this as patiently as he could, and in time the hostility of Gates lost its force, for Gates had opportunity to show himself a great general, and did not succeed in doing so. His ambitions had to be content within narrower limits created by his own incapacity, and at length he ceased to trouble.

General Charles Lee, of whom we heard something at Monmouth, was another of the plotters,

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and there were officers who believed that if he were to command the army victory would come soon. After that battle, he wrote Washington an abusive letter, and at his own request was tried by court-martial. Lee was convicted of disobedience and misbehavior in the presence of the enemy, and of disrespect to his commander-in-chief. He resigned, and before the end of the Revolution he died.

General Thomas Mifflin, a rather vain officer of some ability, was another of Washington's critics. When the Revolution came to a close, he was president of Congress, and it was to him Washington addressed his words as he laid down his duties at the end of that struggle. Mifflin's gracious words on that occasion seemed to indicate that all bitterness was past, and that Washington had won even the hearts of some of those who most strongly opposed him.

When we consider how strongly these men and their doings provoked Washington, and how hot a temper he had, it is much to his credit that he exercised a patience that caused some of those who hated him to acknowledge his greatness, while others went into deserved obscurity.

Hardest of all these sad losses of friends for Washington and the country was that caused by the treason of Benedict Arnold. A brave and sensitive officer, who had much reason to think that

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his services were not appreciated as they deserved, and who had married a brilliant woman and had gone heavily into debt, he agreed to surrender West Point to the British for a large sum of money and a commission in the army. The plot was discovered, but Arnold escaped. He served in the British army against his country, and went to England where he spent the remaining years of his unhappy life. England gave him the promised money and the commission, but held him in scorn.

Quite different was the feeling in both countries toward Major André, the British officer who carried the message between Arnold and British headquarters. He was guilty of a crime for which the military punishment was hanging, and Washington permitted the sentence to stand and to be carried out. But André was respected on both sides of the water, and he received honorable burial in Westminster Abbey. There is a tradition concerning Arnold, that he visited the Abbey and stood sadly gazing at André's tomb, and departed with downward look, the least loved man on earth. Washington was right when he said, in perhaps his only known letter alluding to the subject:

"I am mistaken if at this time Arnold is undergoing a mental hell. He wants feeling. . . . While his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse."

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Of André, Washington said:

"He met his fate with that fortitude which was to be expected from an accomplished man and gallant gentleman."

Not less heroic than that of André, was the death of Nathan Hale, a rare and noble spirit whom the British put to death as a spy. "I regret," said he, "that I have only one life to give for my country."

In one case where Washington was constrained against his own inclination to insist on the execution of a young English officer, a fine lad, Captain Asgill, and sympathy for the young man was very general, Washington submitted the matter to the Congress. He was very glad when that body, acting in harmony with public sentiment, ordered the release of the prisoner. The young man was technically guilty of being a spy, and according to the laws of war he deserved to die. Washington took pains, however, to say that the leniency that had been shown in this case was not to be put to his own credit. He was rather more willing to be charged with cruelty than to seem indifferent to grave international wrong; but he was very glad to have the young officer released and sent back to England to his mother.

In those days when every evil rumor was rife, when Washington's private character was assailed and every possible vile motive was attributed to

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him, he was charged with the secret design of creating a kingdom on this side of the Atlantic and proclaiming himself king. Indeed, he had friends who advised him to do that very thing. Washington recoiled with horror from the suggestion. He had entered the war to make his country free, not to enslave it; and he received the proposal with stern rebuke.

War is not simply the movement of armies, and the fire and sword of battle. Personal jealousies, spites, vanities, bickerings and treacheries are more difficult for noble minds to meet than actual perils. Washington met all of these, and met them nobly.

CHAPTER XX

THE DIM DAWN OF PEACE

1781-1782

MANY men can be brave in danger, and are able to sustain misfortune without losing their character, but fail when they meet success. It is proverbial that some people are unable to endure prosperity. Washington was not one of these. As he had been brave in battle, and was undismayed when disaster overtook him, so in the hours of victory he was calm and dignified and strong.

The six years of fighting and two of weary waiting came to an end, and Washington was at liberty to sheathe the sword which he had drawn under the old elm in Cambridge. He was more than ready to go home.

One final testing came to him. The army was unpaid and was virtually in rebellion. Washington had strong sympathy with the soldiers who were ready to revolt. A friend of Washington, Colonel Nicola, wrote him a letter clearly implying that what the colonies needed at that juncture was that Washington should take matters into his own hands and save the country. Washington

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could not ignore this proposal, for it came from a man of prominence and character. He replied:

“With a mixture of surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and [which] I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation of the matter shall make a disclosure necessary. I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which seems to me big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my power and influence in a constitutional way extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature.”

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These were the days of the dim twilight of peace, when war was over but peace had not come. It sometimes seemed as though peace never could return. There was no well-settled government. There was no assurance about the future. The weeks dragged on and became months; there were rumors, most of them false, as to what the king would do, and what the colonies would do next, but there was no real peace. The people grew despondent, and the army more and more resentful. This situation taxed Washington's patience to the utmost. Indeed, he was often impatient, and with good reason. But he held on. For him to leave and go home while the war was still technically in progress would have meant chaos. He remained at his post.

There was a proposal that the soldiers should march to Philadelphia and compel the Congress to pay the money that was owed to them. Washington put down this mutiny with a strong hand. Much as he sympathized with the soldiers, he would not tolerate these lawless measures even to secure the rights of the army.

But he said it was "high time for peace." So also thought the people of Great Britain, and all too tardily it came.

CHAPTER XXI

THE RETURN OF PEACE

1783

MANY things can be seen clearly afterward that are not plain at the time. We can see very plainly that the Revolutionary War should have ended with the surrender of Cornwallis. But neither side felt sure of it then. The British had other armies in the colonies, and Clinton's was a larger one than that of Cornwallis. Washington could not be sure that Clinton would not give him battle again. If Washington had disbanded his army after the surrender of Cornwallis, the war would have gone on and the British would have won. Washington had to continue in the field, ready to fight.

But the British did not fight. It became evident to Clinton that there was no further use in fighting unless Great Britain stood ready to increase her armies very greatly, and Britain was in no position to do this. The war had been a very heavy drain upon the British public purse, and many people in Britain had never believed in it. So the fighting ceased, but the army had to be maintained.

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But the surrender of Cornwallis came gradually to be accepted as the end of the war. That event made it evident that the colonies were not to be subdued by fighting. They had won fewer battles than they had lost, but they had worn down the invading armies, and disheartened the advocates of oppression. Every battle, even of those that the colonies lost, widened the gulf between the colonies and the mother country. Peace had to come. War can not go on for ever. There was no possible basis of peace but a recognition of the independence of the colonies.

On May 7, 1782, Sir Henry Clinton, who had succeeded Lord Howe, was relieved of official duties, and succeeded by Sir Guy Carleton, who immediately announced that he had been appointed a commissioner to treat with the American commander-in-chief to consider the terms of a permanent peace between Great Britain and the United States. Communication across the water was slow in those days, and the formalities were in progress for nearly a year. But on April 19, 1783, the eighth anniversary of the beginning of the Revolutionary War, a formal cessation of hostilities was proclaimed.

The last battle had been fought and finished October 18, 1781, but it was not till September 3, 1783, that the treaty of peace was signed. Washington declared that these two years were the dull-

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est of his life. There was neither war nor peace. The British had ceased to fight but had not left the American shores, and it was an open secret that the king wanted to do more fighting, but Parliament would not support him in further warfare. It was a glad day for Washington when it all ended, and he was a free man again.

Very recently there was discovered an unpublished letter of Washington to General Knox which proves to be of particular interest. Knox was very anxious, as also was Washington, about the soldiers' pay, and Washington had no money to send to Knox. But he had good news, though as yet not official. The British and Colonial representatives, meeting in France, agreed, January 20, 1783, to a cessation of hostilities to become effective April nineteenth. Benjamin Franklin despatched the information on the very next day, January twenty-first. But a swift corvette, sailing from Spain February fifth, arrived in New York March twenty-fourth, and brought the unofficial report two weeks ahead of the ship bearing Franklin's official despatches. The voyage had been so incredibly swift, the news was so welcome, it seemed almost too good to be true. Perhaps in no other letter did Washington paraphrase Scripture; silver and gold had he none, but such as he had he gave to Knox. The copy of the despatch which he enclosed is lost, but the short letter thrills with

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enthusiasm, something very unusual in General Washington. Furthermore, he praises his soldiers instead of complaining of them, and that makes good reading. This little gem of a letter, hitherto unpublished, was written from Washington's headquarters at Newburgh on the Hudson:

"Newburgh, 26th March, 1783

"My dear Knox

"Such as I have, I give unto thee.—God grant the news may be true.—But whether it is or not, the late conduct of the army will redound to the immortal honor of it.

"Yrs most sincerely,

"GO. WASHINGTON."

A fortnight later the official despatches arrived. The chaplains of the several regiments were instructed to "render thanks to Almighty God for all His mercies, particularly for overruling the wrath of man for His own glory, and causing the rage of War to cease among the nations." It was a proud and thankful day for George Washington.

There had been attempts to bribe him, and he had scorned them. He had been offered the title of king, and had indignantly refused it. He had not accepted any salary for his eight years of service, but only his necessary expenses. He came out of the war with high honor, and with a loyalty which could not be measured by any gain accepted as the price of his service.

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One of the things Washington had to do was to make some humane provision for the loyalists whose homes were confiscated. These had become enemies of their country, and by the stern rules of war must leave it. Let us hope that the time may come when a more excellent way will be found. Among the "Tories" were many outlaws and bandits, who deserved the sternest punishment; but among them also were many high-minded men and women who loved the mother country and feared to trust the perilous adventure of democracy, and who deserved considerate treatment. There were thousands of men, American born, who had served in the British army. "The Provincial Corps" contained scholars and men of prominence.

The British Government did not provide for these people as it ought, and Washington cooperated with Sir Guy Carleton in assisting those who wished to remove to Canada. On May 17, 1783, five thousand of these loyalists were sent to St. Johns, New Brunswick, and that became the natal day of that Province. Toronto was founded by these people, many of them men of high standing. The thirty thousand Americans who removed to Canada at the close of the Revolution were of immense value to that sparsely settled region, a majority of whose inhabitants had been of French stock. Much of the best blood in Canada migrated there in or soon after 1783, and from the colonies.

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War leaves a sad aftermath, and Washington had his full share of responsibility for the closing up of an eight years' conflict. At last, on November 25, 1783, he rode back into New York, from which he had been driven in 1776, and he was received with great rejoicing and high honor.

It would appear that, at the close of the Revolution, every one was praising Washington. Even his enemies declared he had shown himself a great general. His soldiers lauded him as no man in the American colonies had ever been lauded.

Washington, who had been calm in defeat, was dignified when he assumed the rôle of victor and was so proclaimed. He did not mar his glory by expressions of egotism, and he spoke no word of hatred or revenge. Never had he seemed so great as in the hours of his complete triumph.

Congress was voting tracts of land to men who had performed large military service, and Washington loved land. Since he had refused money, it was thought well to make him a great gift of land on the western side of the mountains. Washington refused to take it. He held to his determination to do nothing that could appear like the acceptance of pay. To be sure, he could afford to serve without compensation, and some officers could not. He did not criticize others who accepted their wage and their land grants; but for himself, he did not obtain either his money or his land in that way.

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The British army departed from New York November 25, 1783. Before Washington left New York he took a formal farewell of his comrades in arms. Chief Justice Marshall has left us an interesting account of that incident:

“This affecting interview took place on the fourth of December. At noon, the principal officers of the army assembled at Fraunces’ tavern; soon after which, their beloved commander entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them and said, ‘With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you—I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honorable.’ Having drunk, he added, ‘I can not come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand.’ General Knox, being nearest, turned to him. Incapable of utterance, Washington grasped his hand, and embraced him. In the same affectionate manner, he took leave of each succeeding officer. In every eye was the tear of dignified sensibility; and not a word was articulated to interrupt the majestic silence and the tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed the corps of light infantry, and walked to White hall, where a barge waited to convey him to Powles’ Hook [Paulus Hook]. The whole company followed in mute and solemn procession, with dejected countenances, testifying feelings of delicious melancholy, which no language can describe. Having

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entered the barge, he turned to the company; and waving his hat, bade them a silent adieu. They paid him the same affectionate compliment, and after the barge had left them, returned in the same solemn manner to the place where they had assembled."

Congress was then sitting in Annapolis. Thither Washington went, and on December 23, 1783, at high noon, he appeared before that body. There he was greeted with solemn dignity and delivered a brief address. In it he said:

"I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this last act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country, to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

After advancing to the chair, and delivering his commission to the president, he returned to his place, and received, while standing, the answer of Congress which was delivered by the president. In the course of his remarks, General Mifflin said:

"Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world; having taught a new lesson useful to

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those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression, you retire from the great theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow citizens; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command: it will continue to animate remotest ages."

When Washington had delivered his very brief address, and General Mifflin had made his fitting response, the meeting broke up. Washington did not remain long for festivities. He was near to his home and impatient to be there. He remained for the briefest time that was suitable for a visit of such ceremony, and on the same afternoon mounted his horse, and was quietly on his way to Mount Vernon.

CHAPTER XXII

BACK TO THE LAND

1784-1786

GEORGE WASHINGTON had left Mount Vernon in the spring of 1775 to ride to Philadelphia and attend the Continental Congress. From there he had been sent to Cambridge to take command of the armies of the Thirteen United Colonies. Once only in all the intervening years had he seen his own home. In September, 1781, as he was on his way to Williamsburg and Yorktown to besiege and capture Cornwallis, he made a brief call at his own house. Now, on December 23, 1783, he was on his way back, and with only a few miles to go. It was one of the shortest days in the year. The sun was low when he left Annapolis, and the light faded fast, but he hurried on in the growing dusk, and still on as the night gathered about him. The road was familiar. He had traveled it hundreds of times to market and to meeting. Never, perhaps, had it seemed so long. He was hastening away from all that had held him so long a stranger to his own hearthside. He was leaving behind the perils and the plots of military life. He had but

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one thought, which was to get back to his home, and never leave it again. All too slowly the lingering miles crept past him and were left behind. At length the lights of Mount Vernon shone through the dark, and something of the Christmas glow was in their beams. It was a happy home-coming, with the spirit of the season already in the place. The hoofs of his horse clattered over the frozen road to the familiar home. Doors flung wide, and many voices greeted him as he rode up and dismounted. A score of eager black hands were reaching for his bridle-rein. He dismounted, and stepped inside, where Martha and the two small children of Jack and Nellie awaited him. General George Washington was home again in Mount Vernon.

We do not have Washington's diaries for this period. But before he left Philadelphia, as he turned homeward for Christmas in 1783, he entered in his note-book these purchases:

By Sundries bot. in Phila.

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|-----|----|
| A Locket | 5 | 10s | |
| 3 Small Pockt Books | 1 | 10 | |
| 3 sashes | 1 | 5 | |
| Dress Cap | 2 | 8 | |
| Hatt | 3 | 10 | |
| Handkerchief | 1 | | |
| Children's Books | | 4 | 6d |
| Whirligig | | 1 | 6 |
| Fiddle | | 2 | 6 |
| Quadrille Boxes | 1 | 17 | 6 |

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He and Martha had adopted as their own two of the children of Jack and Nellie Custis. But Washington had hardly seen them. The older of the two children, Nellie Custis, was then two and one-half years old. Eleanor Parke Custis was her full name, and when she married she became Mrs. Lawrence Lewis. But it was as Nellie Custis that the adopted daughter of General Washington became known to the nation, and the name clung to her. She was the third daughter of John Parke Custis and Eleanor Calvert, his wife, and so was the granddaughter of Martha Washington. Nellie grew up to be a famous beauty, and her grandfather loved her dearly.

The little boy, George Washington Parke Custis, who in the family was known as "Washington," was two years younger than Nellie. Him, too, did Washington love, and Mrs. Washington, who sometimes compelled Nellie to practise her lessons on the thousand-dollar harpsicord that had been bought for her, seldom compelled the little boy to do anything that he did not like to do.

These two children the general had in mind as he was leaving Philadelphia, and he determined not to let the business of resigning his generalship detain him in Annapolis so as to keep him from home on Christmas.

Washington's diaries stopped when he left Yorktown in November, 1781, hastening from the sur-

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render of Cornwallis to the deathbed of Jack Custis. He did not resume them during the long drawn out interval of waiting for peace. If we had his own account of that Christmas at Mount Vernon, he would probably have left us very little record of the festivities. He would have told who were the guests, and at what hour they dined, and then would have recorded what he discovered about the condition of the mill and the smoke-house and the dairy as he walked about after dinner. Washington did not record in detail his feelings about his family. But he loved children, and especially these children, now doubly his own.

Soon he was at work on his plantations, visiting his different farms and fields and making new notes in his agricultural books. He wrote to a soldier friend in France:

“I am at length become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, where under my own vine and fig-tree, free from the bustle of a camp and the intrigues of a court, I shall view the busy world with calm indifference, and with serenity of mind, which the soldier in pursuit of glory, and the statesman of a name, have not leisure to enjoy.”

Mount Vernon became at once a place of pilgrimage, and many notable people visited there. General and Mrs. Washington received them with the utmost hospitality, and were happy to have

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with them friends or even strangers. But it was a busy life they led. Many of their visitors brought them real joy.

Early in the first year after Washington's return to Mount Vernon, he had a visit from Lafayette. He had parted with that general at Yorktown, Washington to visit the bedside of his stepson and Lafayette to return to France. Lafayette was back in America, and he wrote eagerly:

"There is no rest for me till I go to Mount Vernon. I long for the pleasure to embrace you, my dear General; and the happiness of being once more with you will be so great that no words can ever express it."

Washington, too, was eager for the visit, and Lafayette was received with almost regal honor.

After the visit Lafayette wrote:

"Adieu, adieu, my dear General. It is with inexpressible pain that I feel I am going to be severed from you by the Atlantic. Everything that admiration, respect, gratitude and filial love can inspire is combined in my affectionate heart to devote me most tenderly to you. In your friendship I find a delight which words can not express. Adieu, my dear General."

If Washington's letters were somewhat less effusive, they were no less genuinely affectionate. The visit of Lafayette was of the most interesting

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character, and it has passed into history as one of the memorable events that mark the progress of a great and enduring friendship. For, whether France and her king deserved much credit for the help they gave the colonies, there is no doubt about the sincerity of Lafayette's devotion to the colonial cause. And he, at least, had no reason to think that republics were ungrateful. America loved and still loves him more than France ever did or is likely ever to do.

Two days after the departure of General Lafayette, Washington resumed his diary. It might have been expected that he would have begun with some account of the visit of his distinguished friend, but he did nothing of the kind. Or, he might have given a brief summary of the memorable events that had caused him to desist from his old time habit of making a daily record of his doings. He did not do that. He did not write out any account of the restoration of peace, or of his resignation of his generalship, or of any of the important events in which he had been so recent a participant, but he started again with the following entry:

“Having found it indispensably necessary to visit my Landed property West of the Apalachian Mountains, and more especially that part of it which I held in Copartnership with Mr. Gilbert Simpson.—Having determined upon a tour into that country, and having made the necessary

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preparations for it, I did, on the first day of this month, set out on my journey.

“Having dispatched my equipage about 9 O’clock A. M., consisting of 3 servants and 6 horses, three of which carried my baggage, I set out myself in company with Doctor James Craik; and after dinner at Mr. Samson Trammells (abt. 2 miles above the Falls Church) we proceeded to Difficulty Bridge, and lodged at one Shepherd’s Tavern 25 Miles.”

That was the first day’s record. He was in the saddle from that day on for more than a month, and some of the time the weather was very unfavorable. He traveled “on the same horses” (which was a matter worth recording, for it showed that the horses had good care) six hundred eighty miles, and he returned home “before sun down” on October fourth, having breakfasted that morning by candle-light that he might complete his tour on that day.

It is interesting to find him, on September twenty-seventh, following the waters of New Creek to Patterson’s Creek, and so through to the South Fork of the Potomac. Here he had been in 1748, on his first survey for Lord Fairfax, and several times during the French and Indian War. But he did not record any recollections, much less did he indulge in any reflections about his previous visits. Indeed, he was not even moved to reminis-

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cence by following his old trail to Great Meadows, and Fort Cumberland, and along the Braddock march. He was sentimental about some things, but not such as these.

But he set down distances, condition of roads, information obtained as to trade and transportation, names of squatters living on his land, and innumerable details. Having finished his journey by a hard day's ride, he wrote:

“And tho’ I was disappointed in one of the objects which induced me to undertake this journey, namely to examine into the situation, quality and advantages of the Land which I hold upon the Ohio and Great Kanhawa—and to take measures to rescue them from the hands of Land Jobbers and Speculators, who I have been informed regardless of my legal and equitable rights, patents, &c.; had inclosed them with other surveys and were offering them for sale in Philadelphia and in Europe.—I say notwithstanding this disappointment I am well pleased with my journey, as it has been the means of my obtaining a knowledge of facts—coming at the temper and disposition of the Western Inhabitants—and making reflections thereon, which, otherwise, must have been as wild, incoherent, or perhaps as foreign from the truth, as the inconsistency of the reports which I received even from those to whom most credit seemed due, generally were.”

It was in that way George Washington learned,

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by going himself to where he could obtain first-hand knowledge, and making diligent inquiries and recording what information he obtained. Lord Fairfax was correct when he said that he thought Washington would always be a learner.

He had observed the quality of the coal in Pennsylvania, and he thought it excellent. He recorded, also, that the route through Pennsylvania to the west was better than through Virginia. He grew more and more interested in the making of good roads to unite the east and west. There were few prosperous men living on the eastern side of the mountains who had seen so much of what was then called the west or who had such intelligent or progressive ideas about the development of the country as a whole. The mountains did not shut out his vision of a land stretching far toward the sunset, all under one flag, and thinking of itself as one country. Of course he had no vision of a land reaching to the farther ocean; the land beyond the Mississippi still belonged to France; but Washington understood the importance of uniting all sections of this country that belonged to the nation as it then was or could be seen to be likely to become. His was the intelligent vision of a practical and far-seeing man, who loved his country and loved it all.

So Washington returned from his western journey in the fall of 1787, not having succeeded

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very well in the particular business which caused him to undertake the journey, and with no recorded meditations on the contrasts between that journey and the others which he had taken over very much of the same ground many years before, but with a broader outlook upon the resources of his country, and a deepened conviction of its unity and its large future. He resumed his tasks at Mount Vernon, and again made his records of weather and crops and other commonplace matters. He received his guests and played sedately with his grandchildren who had become his children by adoption, and he regretted nothing but that he could not live his life with fewer interruptions.

Washington found that his fame was expensive. It involved a heavy and wearisome correspondence. People wanted to write his life. Men of all sorts wanted his help for many and often foolish schemes. He did his own letter-writing at this time, though much later he used a secretary, Tobias Lear. The quiet he had sought did not wholly come to him. Washington lived before the days of the camera, but many artists painted him, and later, Houdon, a noted French sculptor, made his life mask. In 1785 he wrote to a friend about the portrait painters:

“I am so hackneyed to the touches of painters’ pencils that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit ‘like patience on a monument’ whilst they are

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delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish."

But if these things broke in upon his quiet, they had their compensations, and Washington met the situation with dignity. His real joys in this period were his farms and his live stock. He had excellent tastes in good horses, and was beginning to learn about cattle, though his dairy was not the most profitable part of his plantation. He even enjoyed cock-fighting. In short, his tastes, habits and daily tasks were those of the Virginia gentleman of his time. But he never yielded to the seductive influence of luxury, nor permitted his wealth to make him indolent or uncharitable. He was a stern but a considerate master, a good and faithful friend, and a cultured gentleman.

In one respect his habits changed. He had been very much addicted to fox-hunting, and he expected to return to that sport. Lafayette sent him some celebrated wolfhounds. But these were fierce creatures compared with the foxhounds to which he had been accustomed, and proved unmanageable. He gave up hunting and never resumed it.

In the reading of Washington's journals during his retirement, we gain the impression of a planter so wholly absorbed in the commonplace activities of his house and mill and servants and plantations, we wonder that he had time or mind

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for other matters. His interest in his farm life was so minute, so detailed, we are surprised that he should have cared for all the petty incidentals which went into his record. And, finding that he cared for these microscopic matters, we wonder that he had any other interests. But he was interested in his neighbors, his guests, and in national affairs. Not much in his diaries, but more in his letters, do we learn of these things. In his diaries he was accustomed to record the names of his guests, and his was a generous hospitality.

Resuming his ordinary vocations, almost as if he had not been away, Washington resumed his attendance at the local churches. Before the Revolution he had been a vestryman at Pohick Church. This was also called the Truro Church, and the Truro Parish included most of Fairfax County. Washington's connection with it probably gave an excuse for its being occasionally called Mount Vernon Parish, but that was never its name. After the Revolution, Washington bought a pew in the church at Alexandria, and attended there frequently. He subscribed to various churches, and they were all in need of his help, for the war had been hard upon them all. He was a reverent attendant, and a close listener to the sermon. Reverend Lee Massey, who had been rector of Pohick Church before the Revolution, said of him:

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“His behavior in the house of God was ever so deeply reverential that it produced the happiest effects on my congregation, and greatly assisted me in my pulpit labors.”

Washington's religion was quiet and unassuming, but it was very real to him, and very sincere.

At different times after the Revolution Reverend Mason L. Weems ministered to Pohick Church for brief periods. It was a time of irregular service in the churches of that region, and records are very fragmentary. But we have at least one record in Washington's hand of Weems as a guest at Mount Vernon. He came in the afternoon of Friday, March 2, 1787, spent the night, and remained until noon of the next day. How many times he visited there or met Washington in other homes or at church we do not know, but they were not strangers. And while Weems was not strictly entitled to call himself “Rector of Mount Vernon Parish” the fact that he did so was certainly not resented in the parish. John Davis, an Englishman traveling in America in 1801, told of attending a service in Pohick Church, and the place was crowded. Many came in carriages, and those on horseback were so many it reminded the visitor of a country fair. The sermon was impressive. Whips were cracking, horses were neighing, negro grooms and coachmen were shouting, but “the discourse of Mr. Weems calmed every perturbation, for he

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preached the great doctrine of salvation as one who felt its power." Both while Washington lived and for years after his death, indeed as late as 1817, we find records of his preaching there when Washington was actually present.

George Washington was not a total abstainer from alcohol. In his day practically every one used liquor. Washington owned a still, as did virtually all the larger Virginia planters. He drank wine, punch, toddy and cherry-bounce. But according to the standards of his time, and it is by these he should be judged, he was a temperate man, and he was a foe of drunkenness. For this reason the "Washingtonian Society," composed at first largely of men who had been hard drinkers and sought to reform, and later of friends of the temperance movement including others than reformed men, took its name from him.

Whether at Monmouth or at any other time of extreme provocation he used profane language is disputed and we lack material to prove either the one affirmation or the other; but his usual language was calm and deliberate, as it was also reverent. In the Revolutionary War he more than once rebuked drunkenness, profanity and other evil habits.

Washington, while narrow-chested and predisposed to throat and lung trouble, was usually well and strong. The disease, camp diarrhea, which

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gave him so much trouble in the French and Indian War, did not greatly trouble him in after-life. Through the Revolution he was seldom seriously ill, and when at home he lived so normal an outdoor life that he seldom suffered sickness. He did not often take medicine. His friend, Doctor James Craik, said that "he could not be prevailed on to take the slightest preparation of medicine." But a visitor to Mount Vernon, who was kept awake coughing, heard his door gently opened:

"On drawing my bed curtains, to my utter astonishment, I beheld Washington himself, standing by my bedside, with a bowl of hot tea in his hand."

His sight failed during the Revolution, and he had to put on glasses. His hearing, also, became somewhat impaired. His teeth gave him some trouble, and were defective as early as 1754, when he had a bad tooth extracted. About once a year he made record of the cost of extracting a tooth—five shillings was what they charged him when he was rich. His last tooth left him in 1795. Six years before this he was using false teeth, and they fitted him badly. In 1796, after all his teeth had gone, he had a set of "Sea-horse" teeth, that is, ivory made of the tusk of the hippopotamus. These fitted better, and not only gave him comfort, but improved his speech, which was interfered with by the earlier experiments in dentistry.

CHAPTER XXIII

UNITING A NATION

1787

THE thirteen colonies were officially united in one purpose, which was to be free from Great Britain, but they disagreed on almost everything else. They were sure that a nation three thousand miles away and with many other and closer interests was not capable of governing the colonies effectively, but they did not quickly prove that the colonies were capable of governing themselves. The small colonies were jealous of the large ones, and the large ones were jealous of each other. The Congress had little power, and did not use any too wisely the power which it had.

The colonies were afraid of a strong government. They believed that that was the best government which governed least. During the Revolution they had acted together under a constitution called Articles of Confederation. This had been far better than no central bond of union, but it was not adequate.

The colonies occupied a narrow strip of territory stretching along the Atlantic coast from New

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England to Georgia. It required a long time to send a letter from Boston to Savannah and to obtain a reply, whether the letter was sent by sailing vessel or on horseback. There was no telegraph, no railway, and there were no good roads. There was a post-office department, but it was very ineffective. The colonies were in grave danger of breaking apart.

Not only so, but the settlers were crossing the mountains and opening up the great new West. These new settlements were far away from the coast, and were in danger of forming friendships of their own with interests separate from those of the tide-water colonies. The rivers west of the mountains flowed through the lands of France, and Aaron Burr was not the only man who came very close to treason in proposed alliances with that country or Spain; for beyond the French domain lay Mexico, with its Spanish interests.

It was highly important that the thirteen colonies should be more than "free and independent states"; they needed to be united states. George Washington said, sadly, "We are one nation to-day, and thirteen to-morrow." That fateful to-morrow seemed very near its dawn.

On June 18, 1783, from his headquarters at Newburg on the Hudson, Washington addressed a letter to each of the thirteen governors, in which he said:

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“There are four things which I humbly conceive are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

“1st. An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head.

“2dly. A sacred regard to public justice.

“3dly. The adoption of a proper peace establishment. And,

“4thly. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies, to make the mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interests of the community.

“These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country.”

There was another fear in the mind of Washington, which was that England, seeing how weak and little united the colonies were, would find excuse for another war, and the colonies would be wholly unprepared for it. But he had little reason for this fear. England was inclined to

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accept the end of the Revolution as inevitable, and she had other troubles that needed attention. George III had lost greatly in prestige, and he had no inclination to renew a quarrel which had brought him much sorrow and expense and obtained for him very little glory.

The dangers to the colonies were those that existed nearer home. There were hard times after the war; there always are. War is wasteful and expensive, and it has to be paid for. Thousands of honest men found themselves heavily in debt. Continental paper money had been issued in vast quantities, and it had so little value that an officer's pay for a month would scarcely buy him a pair of boots. Even now, more than a hundred years afterward, we sometimes hear it said that something is "not worth a Continental." So poor and cheap was Continental money. But after the war, debts that had been contracted in cheap money had to be paid in dear money. This is one reason why hard times almost always follow a war. In Massachusetts there was an armed rebellion under Daniel Shays. In Concord itself, where the Revolution had begun, an armed mob, led by a criminal but having in it many men who had been soldiers, had to be dispersed by military force. It became evident that a stronger government was needed.

Toward the end of 1786 a call was issued for a Convention to create a more perfect union. Wash-

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ington was elected a delegate, and for a while he thought he would not attend; but as the time drew near his interest in the purpose of the gathering overcame his reluctance to leave Mount Vernon, and he set forth for Philadelphia. He arrived in that city on May 13, 1787, the day before that set for the opening of the Convention. Not every delegate was so prompt. The first regular session was delayed until May twenty-fifth, and some delegates did not arrive for several weeks after this date.

The whole number of delegates was fifty-five. They sat in Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence had been adopted. George Washington, fifty-five years of age, was chosen to preside. When he was not present, Benjamin Franklin was in the chair. He was a much older man than Washington. Thomas Jefferson was not present; he was in France. John Adams also was in Europe. James Madison was one of the young members; he was thirty-six. Alexander Hamilton was still younger; he was only thirty. It is a remarkable fact when we consider the lack of educational advantages in the colonies, or some of them, that of the fifty-five delegates, twenty-nine were college men.

The discussions were many and long. At times it seemed as though agreement could not be reached; but at last the delegates united in the

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adoption of the Constitution which became the formal basis of American liberty and union.

On Monday, September 17, 1787, Washington wrote in his diary:

“Met in Convention, when the Constitution received the unanimous consent of 11 States and Colo. Hamilton’s from New York, and was subscribed to by every member present except Governor Randolph and Colo. Mason of Virginia, & Mr. Gerry of Massachusetts.

“The business being thus closed, the members adjourned to the City Tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other. After which I returned to my lodgings, did some business with, and received the papers from, the Secretary of the Convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous wk. which had been executed, after not less than five, for a large part of the time six and sometimes 7 hours sitting every day [except] Sundays and the ten days adjournment to give a Comee. opportunity & time to arrange the business for more than four months.”

It was a very unusual thing for Washington to record that he retired for meditation. We can not wonder that he was thus impressed as he saw the work of the Convention completed and the Constitution adopted. It had still to be ratified by the states, and there was strong opposition. Patrick Henry said:

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“Even from that great leader who saved us by his valor, I will demand a reason for this instrument. Why does this Constitution say, ‘We the people’? Why does it not say ‘We, the States’?”

That question, unfortunately, came up to disturb the counsels of the new nation for a long time to come. Not till after 1865 was the final answer made. Then it was settled in accordance with the first of Washington’s four pillar-principles that the basis of our free government was to be, “An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head.” Daniel Webster had to say the same thing in the Senate—“Liberty and union, now and for ever, one and inseparable.” And Lincoln said it at Gettysburg, “that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

CHAPTER XXIV

OUR FIRST PRESIDENT

1789-1797

THE Constitutional Convention sent its report to the governors and legislatures of the Thirteen Colonies, with a provision that when nine states out of the thirteen should ratify the Constitution it should become law. The first state to ratify it was Delaware, December 6, 1787. Pennsylvania and New Jersey ratified in that same month. Others followed slowly, and it was not till June 21, 1788, that New Hampshire gave the ninth affirmative vote that made the Constitution effective. Virginia followed four days later. Her vote was highly important, and even more so was that of New York, which was given July twenty-sixth. North Carolina held out till November twenty-first. But the last and least of all the states, Rhode Island, fell into line May 29, 1790.

The result had not been easy. Only the influence of Hamilton carried New York. Virginia paid great heed to the voice of Patrick Henry, who opposed it to the end. Even after the Constitution had been adopted and the election of a president

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was ordered, New York held back, and that state and Rhode Island had no share in making George Washington the first president.

The election was held, however, and when the sixty-nine electoral votes were cast, there were sixty-nine for George Washington. John Adams was chosen vice-president, out of a large list of candidates. The new government, of the people, by the people, for the people, was organized and at work. The Articles of Confederation had given place to the instrument of a more perfect union, and the Constitution was a fact.

By March 4, 1789, Washington felt sure of his election, and began to plan for another long absence from his home. He had been neglecting his plantation, and had bad crops. He had to borrow six hundred pounds to pay his debts before leaving Mount Vernon. On March eleventh, he paid what proved to be his last visit to his mother at Fredericksburg. She died in the following summer, August 25, 1789, aged eighty-two.

The votes were counted April sixth. Washington was notified of his election April fourteenth. Charles Thomson, the aged secretary of the old Continental Congress brought the official tidings. About one o'clock, in the dining-room at Mount Vernon, he delivered to General Washington the official certificate of his election.

Two days later, Washington wrote:

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“April 16.—About ten o’clock I bade Adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York in company with Mr. Thomson and Colo. Humphreys, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its calls, but with less hope of answering its expectations.”

On April twenty-third he entered New York. Just a week later he stood on a balcony at the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets, facing a vast crowd assembled at high noon. A Bible, borne on a velvet cushion, was provided, and the oath of office was administered by Chancellor Livingston. With bowed head the new president took the oath, and the chancellor shouted, “Long live George Washington, President of the United States!”

And the crowd answered with a mighty cheer.

Rome was a republic for centuries, but it was a republic of very different kind from that of which Washington became president. Certain of the Greek cities were governed by vote of the free-men, but Plato’s Republic, and every republic of which he knew anything, was only large enough for its voters to assemble within sight and hearing of one another. Washington came to be the head of a new kind of nation, a republic composed of smaller republics, none of them as small as Plato

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had in mind. He had few traditions to guide him. He was an aristocrat, and he did not desire the new democracy to be too free and easy. At his receptions he did not shake hands, but stood in his black velvet suit, with gold knee-buckles, wearing yellow gloves and having his hair in a silk bag at the back of his neck. He wore a sword, and carried a cocked hat with an ostrich feather. Some people complained that his official conduct was monarchical and undemocratic, but at least he made it plain that the new nation had a president who did not hold his office cheap. When he drove, it was in a coach with four or six horses, with outriders and attendants in livery. Every Tuesday afternoon he had a formal reception, and on Friday Lady Washington held receptions of her own.

He set the custom whereby the president makes no visits, but President and Lady Washington had a constant procession of guests at their own table.

As he and Martha had to work out all these details with little of precedent to guide them, it is remarkable that they did it so well, providing for reasonable privacy and time for work, and guarding the office with rules of a simple dignity. Washington was a man who did things by rule.

Washington had to select a Cabinet. It was new business for him as it would have been for any man. He could have had little idea what members he wanted or what he wanted them to do. Yet he

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chose with remarkable wisdom. Thomas Jefferson, who was still abroad, he chose as secretary of state, or, as he was then called, foreign minister. Alexander Hamilton was selected as secretary of the treasury. General Henry Knox was secretary of war, and Edmund Randolph, attorney-general.

The leading spirits in the Cabinet were the first two, though all were strong men. Thomas Jefferson was nothing if not a democrat, and Alexander Hamilton so strongly believed in a centralized government that he was called a monarchist. He and Jefferson at once became heads of two opposing systems of government that have been recognized ever since. Jeffersonian democracy is still a term of meaning in American political life, while Hamilton's theory of "the States in Empire" may be said to be that which the Civil War settled as a fixed condition of Washington's "indissoluble union" of the several states under one federal head. The Federalists and Democrats did not at once form organized political parties, but the material for such parties was present in Washington's first Cabinet. Washington, like Lincoln, did not try to select a Cabinet of men who would always agree with him. He sought and obtained men of ability but of widely divergent views. And his personality gave whatever hope there was of unity of spirit where there was such divergence of opinion.

As it developed, Washington's policy with



The President's Levee

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respect to his Cabinet was the wisest possible. The new president found his own knowledge and judgment much strengthened by the counsel of men who saw things from different points of view. But the differences might have led to wrangling and confusion if there had not been so calm and wise a man as Washington to guide and direct.

Some very embarrassing questions rose at once. The French Government was one of the first to recognize the new nation, and its minister believed that as France had assisted the colonies in the securing of their independence, France should stand in a peculiar relation to the government of the United States. He requested that he alone of foreign ambassadors should be permitted to go directly to the president for conference on international matters. Washington met this request with courtesy but with a firm refusal. He let France understand that, grateful as the United States was for the help of France, the French Government must deal with the Government of the United States precisely as other nations were expected to do. Proposals and communications must be in writing and pass to the president through the State Department. This was a disappointment to France, but the wisdom of the decision was very soon apparent.

Congress was in session when Washington was inaugurated, and when it adjourned he decided to

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make a tour of the New England states. His tour from Annapolis to New York had been an important one, and he believed that it would be well if the president were personally to visit, during his term of office, as many parts of the nation as possible. He made the tour, which was an interesting one, and perhaps its most important event, as we now see it, was one that at the time seemed a trivial difference of opinion between two proud men.

John Hancock, of the bold signature and imposing personality, was governor of Massachusetts; and he believed that within his own state a governor was to be esteemed a greater man than a president. He did not, therefore, go forth to meet President Washington and welcome him to the city, but waited for President Washington to call on Governor Hancock, and dine with His Excellency, the chief magistrate of that proud commonwealth.

Washington was very angry. He not only did not call on Governor Hancock, but he cancelled his engagement to dine with him that evening. And the sun of that October Saturday went down upon his wrath.

That was indeed a very bad situation, and Boston was greatly disturbed through the morning hours of the Puritan Sabbath. But about noon, His Excellency, Governor John Hancock, sent a note to His Excellency, President George Wash-

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ington, regretting that an attack of gout had prevented the governor's showing the president his expected courtesy, and proposing to call on the president in half an hour, though intimating that to do so would greatly imperil his health. President Washington replied that Governor Hancock would be welcome, but suggested that he should not incur great risk to his health.

So, in half an hour, John Hancock appeared, swathed in flannels, and carried in a chair. Boston had a hard time keeping its Sunday face straight as it beheld its governor on his way to pay his official respects to the president, with an apology for not having met the president as he entered the city.

It seemed a childish matter for two distinguished men to be angry about, but what Washington taught John Hancock and every other governor down to the present time was that the nation is greater than any one state, and the president is a man of greater prominence than a governor.

Washington felt so sure that the president of the United States ought to know the whole country and belong to the whole country that he sometimes headed his letters, not with the name of the city where he was, either New York or Philadelphia, but "The United States of America." His tour of New England in 1789 was followed by one to Rhode Island in 1790, and another through the

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South in 1791. He traveled in state, and there were those who thought that he aped royalty, but he maintained the dignity of the presidential office, and he brought the official head of the nation into close official and social relations with all sections of the country.

Foolish critics have had many a merry laugh over the fussiness of Washington in these and like matters. Washington was fussy. But he saw more clearly than some men of his time and some of after-times that this nation must assume powers and dignities greater than those of any one state or section, and Washington found effective ways of enforcing his opinions.

When we consider how few precedents Washington had to guide him, how many were the pitfalls that beset his path, and how many times he had to decide not only the course that was best for himself and his own administration but the course that was to become the basis of established precedent, we wonder that he could have acted so wisely and so well. He was not always cheerful about it. Almost immediately after his inauguration he had a carbuncle on his thigh. For six weeks he could sleep only on one side, and was in almost constant pain. During those weeks and afterward many and vexed questions had to be considered. How was the army to be paid? How was the debt of the war to be funded and retired? On what basis

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could the new government establish credit? How were the questions to be settled that came up from the several states? How were the jealousies and strifes of the war to be met and conquered? How was the Supreme Court to be organized? How was he to select competent men for office? How was he to deal with the Indian tribes? What was to be the attitude of the president toward the representatives of foreign nations? How could the states be made to trust one another and the Federal Government?

He had written to a friend:

“I can foresee no evil greater than disunion; than those unreasonable jealousies which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils for the prevention of real ones.”

Washington believed that there was no use in having a great country unless we were to love the whole of it. He sought to inspire confidence in one another among the states, and he believed jealousies and local selfishness to be dangerous to the whole spirit of our institutions.

It has been said a thousand times, and sometimes by eminent people, that if George Washington had been alive in 1861, he would have cast in his lot with Virginia and the Confederate Government. It is very easy to make such statements and impossible to disprove them. We are one nation

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to-day, and the more firmly that fact becomes fixed in the minds of the people in every part of this country, the better. We shall do well to waste little time fighting over old battles of the Civil War. George Washington loved Virginia. But if he loved his state more than he loved his country, he left singularly little evidence of it on record. Whether it was some noisy state-rights Virginian, or come conservative dweller in Massachusetts with the town-meeting as his idea of government who lifted up his voice against the Federal Union, George Washington's views were consistent and emphatic.

In one of his letters he said:

"I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation without having lodged somewhere a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the state governments extends over the several states."

That sounded like monarchy to some people; "imperialism" is what it would later have been called; but it meant that Washington believed not only in the kind of democracy which Jefferson advocated, based on the rights of the individual citizen and his sovereign state, but also in the empire erected out of sovereign states, as Hamilton held and taught.

One of the ways in which the new government

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sought to obtain revenue was by a tax on the distilling of whisky. This tax proved very unpopular. Whisky was almost universally used, and any attempt to curb its manufacture or make its use expensive was resented. In 1792 the "Whisky Rebellion" arose. Washington did not hesitate to call out the military to enforce the national laws. He wrote to Governor Lee, of Virginia:

"I am perfectly in sentiment with you, that the business we are drawn out upon should be effectually executed, and that the daring and factious spirit which threatens to overturn the laws and to subvert the Constitution ought to be subdued."

He called out fifteen thousand troops, and said to them through their commander, General Lee:

"No citizen of the United States can ever be engaged in a service more important to their country. It is nothing less than to consolidate and to preserve the blessings which at much expense of blood and treasure constituted us a free and independent nation."

When the rioters saw that the president was in earnest, the rebellion broke down. The authority of the government was sustained. The tax was paid. This meant more than that a certain sum of money that was needed was collected for the use of government; it meant that the Federal Government itself was sustained.

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A great crisis was met and safely passed, largely by the courage and wisdom of Washington.

Concerning foreign nations, Washington was equally wise. He urged that the United States should "keep disengaged from the labyrinth of European politics and wars." He felt that the United States had at least this much of responsibility for such possessions as foreign nations had in the New World, "that none of those who hold such possessions shall presume to treat them with insult or contempt." He added, "It should be the policy of the United States to administer to their wants without being engaged in their quarrels." As for our own future place on the map of the world, he said:

"It is not in the power of the proudest and most polite people on earth to prevent us from becoming a great, respectable, and a commercial nation, if we shall continue united and faithful to ourselves."

When the French Revolution broke out, Washington sympathized with its revolt against oppression. He said, "I have always wished well to the French revolution." But he maintained that this country had one fixed duty, which was to keep its hands off and let the French decide what form of government they wanted for themselves. He said:

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“I have always given it as my decided opinion that no nation has a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that every one had a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves; and that if this country could, consistently with its engagements, maintain a strict neutrality and preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration that ought to actuate a people situated as we are.”

As the French Revolution went on from one act of excess to another, it became more and more evident that Washington was wise in his conviction that the United States did well to keep wholly out of it.

CHAPTER XXV

THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES

1789-1797

ONE reason Washington had for his policy with respect to France did not confine itself to the matter of letting each nation settle its own internal affairs. If France continued to go forward in the way she was going, she was certain to have another war with England; and if so, she would be sure to call upon the United States to help her. Grateful as Washington was for the help of France, he had no mind that the United States should stand ready at any moment to fight France's battles. This country wanted to preserve peace with Great Britain and with all other countries, and not to be bound to fight for or against either of them when they chose to fight each other.

Yet, in this country was much popular hatred of England, growing out of the Revolution, and a very deep sympathy with France. The cloud of the Anglo-French situation was on the horizon during the whole of Washington's eight years as president, and more than once it threatened to overspread the sky.

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The French Republic sent to the United States as ambassador, "Citizen" Genêt, for it was the fashion just then to use this title for officials of all ranks. He was a stirrer-up of mischief. He began at once, even before presenting his credentials, to fit out ships in American waters to cruise as privateers against the British. He found abundance of sentiment favorable to his method and it was not long till Great Britain's minister entered formal protest against the fitting out of ships in American ports to make war on British commerce. Jefferson sympathized strongly with the French. He did not protest even when American soldiers began to enlist for war against England and in favor of the French. This movement was so strong that there was danger of detaching the part of the United States west of the mountains, and allying it with the French interests which existed along the Mississippi.

Washington was compelled to demand the recall of Genêt, and he had much trouble before the serious tangle of the Mississippi was unraveled. We were in danger of three wars at once, with England, with France, and between East and West. Besides all these there were grave dangers of Indian uprisings in several localities.

What ought to have been the beginning of a better state of affairs was a treaty with Great Britain, which greatly needed to be made, and

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which in the main was a good one, but which included some features that brought bitter protest. John Jay negotiated the treaty, and for it he was hanged in effigy in many cities and towns of the United States. The Senate ratified the treaty by exactly the necessary two-thirds vote, and the people rose in mighty denunciation of Jay, and of the Senate and of Washington. Faneuil Hall was packed with a crowd of vehement Bostonians, and New York rose up and stoned Alexander Hamilton when he attempted to speak in defense of the treaty. These matters threatened our relations with France, and also with Spain, and involved great excitement at home. Judged from our present knowledge of all that was involved, Washington appears to have acted as wisely as a strong man could have been expected to do in so complicated a difficulty. He signed the treaty, and in time it began to be more evident that he had acted with wisdom.

At the end of four years, Washington was reelected, and he served for a second term. While some of the initial problems had been solved, others rose. Hamilton and Jefferson had quarreled, as they might have been expected to do, and the cleavage between their followers grew more evident. Washington was glad when his second term drew to its close.

Let it be admitted, also, that Washington was

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not the only one who was glad. He could have had a third term if he had sought it, probably, but it would have brought him divided support and much unhappiness. In February, 1796, the House of Representatives, that had been in the habit of adjourning for a half-day in honor of his birthday, refused this customary courtesy. It was a mean and ungenerous act. When his term ended, one opposition paper proposed a day of rejoicing: "Every heart in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people ought to beat high with exultation that the name of Washington ceases from this day to give currency to insults and to legalize corruption." Washington had his bitter enemies, as all strong men have. But such things hurt even strong men.

One hostile critic said: "Posterity will look in vain for any marks of wisdom in his administration."

Another said: "His character can only be respectable where it is not known. He is arbitrary, avaricious, ostentatious. Without skill as a soldier, he has crept into fame by the places he has held. His financial measures burdened the many to enrich the few. History will tear the pages devoted to his praise."

Words equally bitter and equally unjust were said of Lincoln while he lived.

American people have not yet learned how to be just toward their great men. We never have

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had a great leader who was not shamefully abused while he was alive and as shamelessly glorified after he was dead. The youth of America should learn a more discriminating appreciation of greatness than their fathers have known how to show.

Washington made mistakes. This book has not tried to conceal them. He had faults; we are not seeking to apologize for them. We can afford to be honest. But Washington never deserved the abuse that was hurled at him in the closing months of his administration. By the time the end of his second term approached, Washington clearly saw that there were two political parties, the Federalists, who believed in a strong central government, and the Democrats, who emphasized the rights of the individual and of the state. Washington knew and acknowledged that if he were to be elected for a third term it would be by a vote of the Federalists. Concerning those who opposed the strong central government, he said, "I could not obtain a solitary vote from that party."

There is a tradition that impatient and irritable old John Adams once shook his fist at a bust of Washington, and said, "You old mutton-head! If you hadn't had sense enough to keep your mouth shut, they would have found out how stupid you really were!"

Washington's ability to keep his mouth shut may have been due in part to his badly fitting false

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teeth; but he also had learned that the carefully written word was safer than the officially spoken word. He did not often trust himself to extemporaneous speech. What he had to say on public matters, he wrote.

Fortunately, he did not make public answer to the attacks that were made upon him. Writing to General Henry Lee, he said:

“But in what will this abuse terminate? For the result, as it respects myself, I care not; for I have a consolation within that no earthly efforts can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambition nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, never can reach the most vulnerable part of me.”

Although many of Washington's best friends were urging him to be a candidate for the third term, and there was no argument as to who ought to succeed him, he left no doubt of his intentions: on no condition would he be a candidate for a third time. If the country had been unitedly supporting him as it was at the time of the two previous elections, he might possibly have consented to run again; but it would have been a mistake. He was wise in stopping when he did.

Washington's theory of the presidency was that it should be above party, and he did not like to

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think of himself as belonging to one party rather than the other. He had been elected and reelected by unanimous vote. He had seen the growth of party politics and had been troubled, not for himself but for the country. More and more he found himself in sympathy with the type of government represented by Hamilton and less and less in sympathy with that represented by Jefferson. He had reason to suspect that he could not always trust Jefferson; and we know that that statesman was the author of the treasonable "Kentucky resolutions" which had in them the seeds of disunion and of civil war. Washington knew that Jefferson had opposed him in matters relating to France, and that Jefferson's party had hurled abuse upon him for his treaty with England. Washington's clear vision that America's duty was to attend to its own business, and show friendship for all nations without becoming the ally of any of them, or becoming involved in the quarrels and intrigues of other countries, was not popular with those who wanted to foster hatred of England and alliance with France.

In a long and important letter to Patrick Henry, Washington said that "everything dear and valuable to us is assailed" by those who prefer "the interest of France to the welfare of their own people, justifying the former at the expense of the latter," and that these disturbers were "systemat-

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ically and pertinaciously" pursuing "measures which must eventually dissolve the Union or produce coercion." Washington was a far-sighted man. His internationalism was rooted in a sane and sensible nationalism.

As soon as Washington reached his decision not to be a candidate for a third term, he set about the preparation of a Farewell Address. He talked the matter over with James Madison, with whom at that time he was on good terms, and Madison wrote a considerable part of the address. When the time came to complete it, Washington and Madison had separated, and Washington gave to Alexander Hamilton the material which he had, and Hamilton reshaped portions of the Madison manuscript, and with Washington's approval wrote more. Washington never pretended to have been the sole author of the document. He obtained the best help he could secure, in order to present his convictions as strongly and effectively as he could.

In September, 1796, the Congress assembled. Not in person, but through Dunlop's newspaper, Washington delivered his Farewell Address. The assembling of the Congress was impressive, and the Address was regarded justly as an event which made it memorable. It has become one of the landmarks of American history. Indeed, it may be said with confidence that Washington's declaration

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concerning the foreign policy of the United States is the most important and fundamental affirmation of this nation as to its relations with Europe.

Washington uttered two warnings. The first was against internal strife and sectionalism. He feared the growth of the party spirit in American politics. He desired that all parties and all sections should see the nation as he saw it, a unit, with interests binding the national life of the people together far stronger than any that could justify any section in seeking to withdraw from the interests and welfare of the whole.

The second was a warning to America not to become entangled in the political affairs of European nations. Those countries had their interests quite different from our own. It could do them little good and us much harm to meddle in their internal affairs.

On this important matter Washington's most memorable words were:

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign Nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *Political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

"Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the

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causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, . . . or enmities.

“Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one People, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected. When belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by justice shall counsel.

“Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor or caprice?”

On March 3, 1797, President George Washington gave a dinner in Philadelphia, the seat of government, to President-elect John Adams, Vice-President-elect Thomas Jefferson, the foreign ministers and other distinguished guests and their wives. It was, on the surface, an occasion of good cheer. But there was an undertone of sadness. At the close of the meal, Washington rose and said:

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“Ladies and gentlemen: this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man. I do it with sincerity, wishing you all possible happiness.”

The gaiety ceased, and some of the guests were moved to tears. The party ended with solemnity.

On the next day John Adams was inaugurated the second president of the United States. He paid a high and just tribute to his predecessor, as was right and his bounden duty.

At the close of Adams' inaugural address, Washington rose, removed his hat, made a bow and waved a silent farewell to all present. Neither he nor any of the officials present could have spoken.

In the evening the merchants of Philadelphia served him a notable banquet. When Washington entered the room, the band played *The President's March*, which later became *Hail, Columbia*, and there being no moving pictures, a series of emblematic paintings was displayed showing the illustrious General George Washington, returning like Cincinnatus to his plow, with allegorical figures such as then were deemed appropriate.

A very weary man lay down that night in Philadelphia. George Washington went to his bed holding no office, either civil or military; he was a private citizen, and he was glad of it.

CHAPTER XXVI

GEORGE WASHINGTON, PRIVATE CITIZEN

1797-1799

GEORGE WASHINGTON was not permitted to slip away from Philadelphia quietly. When he and Lady Washington and Nellie Custis, and Lafayette's son, George Washington Lafayette, who was glad just then to be out of France, ascended their coach steps for return to Mount Vernon, Philadelphia and its multitude of visitors, official and otherwise, lined the streets to see them pass, and bid them farewell. All along the road their progress was triumphal. At the cities through which they passed, their greeting was tumultuous. At Baltimore they were met by mounted troops and escorted into the city "through as great a concourse of people as Baltimore ever witnessed." As they alighted at the Fountain Inn, the "reiterated and thundering huzzas" that greeted them woke mighty echoes and found permanent record in the local newspaper. But they did not halt long in any place. Even in Baltimore they remained only one night. They were in haste to get home.

The presence of Lafayette's son with General

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and Mrs. Washington was pathetic. If Washington had suffered from the ingratitude of the United States, Lafayette had suffered more from the ingratitude of France. He was a man of fine spirit but not a man of commanding ability, and in the French Revolution he failed to display those qualities that would either bring him to power or send him to the guillotine. He commanded one of the three revolutionary armies, but, resisting the extremes of the revolutionists, he was declared a traitor by the French Assembly, August 19, 1792. He fled to the neutral city of Liège, but as a dangerous political refugee was held for five years in prisons, first in Prussia and then in Austria. Washington and the United States Government earnestly sought his release but without immediate result. Napoleon held him in contempt, calling him a "noddle" and procured his release from prison in 1797. But Lafayette was not at once permitted to return to France. In time he did return, and was active in political and military life, but he never achieved success. He died May 20, 1834. Nothing that he ever did in France won him renown, nor did he there earn disgrace. It was the gratitude of America that made him famous. He was still in prison when Washington retired from the presidency. His son, named for George Washington, was finding refuge from his own countrymen, and Washington befriended him. So

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when the carriage bearing General and Lady Washington set forth from Philadelphia, it had in it also young George Washington Lafayette and his tutor, Felix Frestal. To young Lafayette, General Washington showed another namesake of his, the Federal City, named Washington.

The "Federal City" was not much to boast of in 1797. It was a marshy place of very little beauty either of landscape or architecture. Philadelphia had been the principal seat of government during the Revolution, until the British took possession of that town, when the capital was moved to Annapolis. Washington's first inaugural, as we know, was in New York, and his second in Philadelphia. But the new Constitution provided that the government might own a home of its own, and Washington desired that it be located on the Potomac. Major L'Enfant drew the plan, and Andrew Ellicott laid out what became the city of Washington.

Washington City paid its welcome to General Washington and his Lady as they were returning to Mount Vernon. It was a meager affair compared with the celebration at Baltimore, but there was a salute of sixteen guns, and there were "repeated huzzahs dictated by hearts sensibly alive to his merits." He spent "£3, 2s, 4d," for his entertainment in the Federal City, while his stop in Alexandria cost him "£5, 1s, 6d."

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His own diary records in this unemotional fashion the conclusion of his triumphal journey home:

"March 15. Recd. the Compliments of the citizens of George Town, as I had done the day before of those of the City of Washington, stopped at Alexa. and got to Mt. V. to dinner.

"16. At home all day alone. Wind at East and very Cloudy all day.

"17. Wind in the same place with rain from 10 o'clock-until 12, clear afterwards."

He was home again, after eight long years, and for several quiet, uneventful and largely indoor days following he and Martha were able to live quietly. But George Washington did not commit to his diary his meditations on the strange changes that had come into his life, or the contrasts between the peace and quiet of Mount Vernon and the events of his two long absences, once as a soldier and the other time as president of the Republic. Much as we should like to we shall never know what he and Martha said to each other on one of those rainy evenings as they sat beside the fire at Mount Vernon. Martha destroyed her husband's letters to her. She did not want to share them with the world. Their home life was their own.

By March twenty-eighth he was so busy about his farms that he made no record even of the weather for the rest of the month and all of April.

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On May first he went to Alexandria, paid forty-seven dollars and eighty-seven cents duty on goods imported from Liverpool, and collected one hundred dollars dividend on bank stock. June twenty-second he began wheat harvest. July seventeenth, he "went up to the Fedl. City" and remained there that day and all the next. For the most part, he was looking over his plantation, which greatly needed his attention. His buildings had been neglected. Moreover, he felt the need of a new building to house his papers. He had a secretary, Tobias Lear, who came into his employ in 1786 and remained with him till death. His coming was a relief to Washington, but the general's correspondence was heavy and he attended to most of it himself.

He gave in a letter an account of his daily life. He was up with the sun in summer and ahead of it in winter. He was in the saddle early, and returned for breakfast at seven o'clock. Then he rode again till dinner. "I rarely miss seeing strange faces," he wrote, "come, as they say, out of respect for me. Pray, would not the word curiosity answer as well? And how different this from having a few social friends at a cheerful board."

Meantime, his correspondence piled high. "When the lights are brought I feel tired and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well. The next night comes and

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with it the same causes for postponement, and so on. Having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year."

Throughout the summer and through the early part of the autumn young Lafayette and his tutor remained at Mount Vernon. They arrived March 15, and took their departure October 12, 1797. When these two guests departed, General Washington accompanied them as far as the "Federal City" which he was glad to know was called by his name, but which he very often referred to in this more modest term. There he took leave of the son of his old friend, sent greetings to the young man's imprisoned father, and, in parting, gave to young Lafayette three hundred dollars to pay his passage back to France. The Lafayettes, father and son, were well treated in America.

Washington did not always think America had been kind in its treatment of him. He had some reason to feel the petty slights and the partisan stings that had fallen to his lot both as commanding general and as president of the new Republic. But when he reflected, with righteous resentment, on the way he had been treated by his countrymen for whom he had done so much, he had only to think of Lafayette, and to remember that some other nations were as inconsiderate as his own.

So he rode back from the "Federal City" and resumed his daily duties at Mount Vernon. No

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longer was he tempted by the appeals of military or political life. His ambition was to live and die a private citizen.

This regular round seemed likely to be interrupted. France was misbehaving again. Charles C. Pinckney, who had been sent as our minister to France, was treated with discourtesy. President Adams then sent a special commission to France. The envoys were insulted, and attempts were made to bribe them. It was not of the Barbary pirates but of France that Pinckney said, "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute."

The situation became intolerable. After much and long continued provocation President Adams was ready to declare war against France. Washington, who had suffered much and long from the behavior of France, believed this decision to be a righteous one. Adams offered Washington the chief command, and Washington, in a letter commending Adams, announced himself as ready to fight again if France did not cease her offensive course. This display of self-respect on America's part was effective. War did not become necessary. But the French situation stirred up new strife, and Washington was involved in the controversies that rose about it. This continued until very near the close of Washington's life.

The quiet opportunity to arrange his papers and devote himself to personal affairs never came.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE DEATH OF WASHINGTON

1799

THE last letter which George Washington ever wrote was addressed to Alexander Hamilton. It related to the establishment of a military academy, a plan which Hamilton formed and Washington heartily approved. His letter was dated December 12, 1799.

That day he rode about his farms, leaving the house at ten o'clock and not returning till past three in the afternoon. Tobias Lear afterward wrote:

"When he came in, his neck appeared to be wet, and the snow was hanging upon his hair. He came to dinner (which was waiting for him) without changing his dress. In the evening he appeared as well as usual."

That evening he wrote in his diary:

"12. Morning cloudy. Wind at No.Et. and Mer.33. A large circle round the Moon last night. About ten o'clock it began to snow, soon after to Hail, and then to a settled cold rain. Mer. 28 at Night."

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The next day, Friday, December thirteenth, a heavy snow fell, and he did not ride out. He complained of a sore throat, and in the evening he was hoarse. But nothing of this went into his diary, and these were the last words he ever wrote:

"13. Morning Snowing abt. 3 inches deep. Wind at No. Et., and Mer. at 30. contg. Snowing till 1 O'clock, and abt 4 it became perfectly clear. Wind in the same place, but not hard. Mer. 28 at Night."

Between two and three o'clock on Saturday morning, he woke Mrs. Washington, but would not permit her to rise for fear she would take cold. He told her he was ill. In the morning, Doctor Craik was sent for. Following the current practise, Washington was bled, and later in the day, on advice of other physicians, he was bled again. There has been hot discussion ever since as to whether George Washington died of a cold and its resulting inflammation, or whether he was so weakened by loss of blood that he could not rally. The account of his treatment as written and signed by his physicians, and that by Tobias Lear, are not cheerful reading. The physicians did their best, but they did not know what should be done for a patient in Washington's condition. If he had changed his wet clothes when he came in on Thursday afternoon, the dry clothing might have done him more good than all that the doctors were able to do for him.

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From his first realization that he was a sick man, Washington did not expect to recover. All day Saturday he grew weaker. He was considerate of every one. He thanked the physicians for their care, and he expressed regret that he should have to tire his secretary: "I fear I fatigue you too much," he said. He spoke to Doctor Craik, saying, "I die hard, but I am not afraid to go." Lear wrote a simple account of Washington's last day. It is well written and convincing. His last hours were those of a brave and good man. He had lived well, and he died bravely. As he grew weaker, he felt his own pulse, and in that act his countenance changed. His hand dropped from his wrist. "It is well," he said, and then was silent.

About ten o'clock, on Saturday night, December 14, 1799, George Washington died.

The Washingtons were short-lived people. His father died at forty-nine, his grandfather at thirty-seven, his great-grandfather at fifty-four. His mother came of sturdier stock, and lived to be eighty-two. She died of what was pronounced cancer, a disease to which Washington appears to have been predisposed, for he was operated on for that malady in 1794, and the operation was successful. Whatever tendency he had to disease, he conquered it. He lived a vigorous outdoor life, and became inured to hardship. His health was rugged during nearly all his life. The diseases of camp did not

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permanently weaken him. He lived longer than most of the Washingtons, being nearly sixty-eight when he died.

The news of his death traveled as fast as news could travel at that time, and it brought a great company of people to attend the funeral. These were told the simple story of his sickness and death, and how, even when struggling for breath, he thought of others. His negro servant Christopher had been on his feet most of the day; Washington, knowing he must be tired, directed him to sit down—this when Washington was near to death. It was a little thing, but it touched all who witnessed and all who heard of it. There was no incident of that death-bed scene that was theatrical, and none that was unworthy. Washington died as he lived, calmly, courageously, and with thought of others than himself. Mrs. Washington, who saw him die, spoke calmly: "Is he gone? It is well. I shall soon follow him. I have no more trials to pass through." These were not great words, but they were the words of a strong and cultured woman, sustained by her faith, and rich in her memories.

These were the things that were told to those who came to Mount Vernon. They were quickly written by Tobias Lear. There has been no opportunity for distorting the simple truth.

The Capitol building in the new city of Wash-

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ington had been begun, and under the dome that was not yet built was a vault that was designed for the body of Washington. But he was not buried there. The family vault at Mount Vernon was already prepared for him.

On Wednesday, December eighteenth, the funeral was held. A vessel lying in the Potomac fired minute guns. A battery of guns brought over from Alexandria fired salutes. The procession was formed. The dignified burial service was read, and all that was mortal of George Washington was buried in the vault at his own Mount Vernon.

Vessels that ascend or descend the noble stream that flows past his plantation to this day toll their bells as they pass the tomb of Washington.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE INFLUENCE OF WASHINGTON

WHILE Washington lived he suffered the fate that has to be endured by all men in public life, but the criticisms that were so freely and unjustly employed while he was living were silenced after his death. Not only in the United States but in Great Britain and throughout Europe he was praised as a brave wise man. Indeed, he was praised indiscriminately, and that fact brought its own reaction. He seemed at that time America's one great man. Biographers hastened to tell the story of his life.

An Englishman, Thomas Jones, had written a sketch of Washington's life about 1785. Reverend Jedidiah Morse, an American minister, at Charlestown, Massachusetts, included in his *American Geography* in 1789 a life story of Washington that was reprinted in various forms after Washington's death. The year 1800 saw four short biographies. Morse's sketch was published in Baltimore with other material in a volume entitled *The Washingtonian*. John Corry, a journalist of Irish birth, wrote a little book about him. It was published in Belfast, Ireland. Thomas Condie published a

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short biography in Philadelphia. But more famous than any of these was the little book by Parson Weems. It was dedicated to Mrs. Washington. While it has many and obvious faults, it has a lively and interesting style. There are few dull pages in it. We may well be glad that Martha Washington read it while she lived. She died May 22, 1802, and is buried with her husband at Mount Vernon.

David Ramsey, an American physician, published a *Life of Washington* in 1807. In the same year was issued the fifth and last volume of a massive biography of him by Chief-Justice John Marshall; the first volume appeared in 1802, and was an introduction to the whole; that volume mentioned Washington only once. These two works, by Ramsey and Marshall, were painstaking, but they tried to make Washington almost superhuman. In 1830, Jared Sparks wrote what was at that time the very best *Life of Washington* that had been published. It was scholarly and well written. He has been ridiculed because when he found errors in Washington's spelling he corrected them in the printing. Popular taste had not then come to demand the crude raw realism of to-day, and Sparks thought it was due so great a man as Washington to cover the trivial and unimportant errors that he made in spelling. We have not done so in this book, but we will not condemn Sparks for having done it. Shortly after Sparks, S. G.

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Goodrich, whose pen name was Peter Parley, wrote a young people's *Life of Washington* which had wide circulation. This had as a companion a biography in two small volumes issued in 1825 by Reverend Aaron Bancroft of Worcester, Massachusetts. The last five years of the life of Washington Irving were devoted to what he hoped would be his masterpiece, a *Life of Washington* in five volumes. He put the last ounce of his energy into it, dying as he completed it in 1859; but his readers did not find it as great a book as he had hoped.

This for a time stood as the high water-mark of Washington biography. The Civil War came on; new heroes arose; it seemed impossible for any one to say anything about Washington after what Irving had written. In 1889 Senator Henry Cabot Lodge wrote a two-volume biography of our first president for the American Statesmen series. It was followed by biographies by William Roscoe Thayer, Woodrow Wilson and others.

In 1896, Paul Leicester Ford wrote a book called *The True George Washington*. It was topical rather than chronological, and utilized much valuable material gathered by his father, and by his brother, Worthington C. Ford, who had edited the writings of Washington. His sister, Mrs. Skeel, has long been at work on a book about Parson Weems, which is not yet published, but which is likely to be of real value.

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Of more recent books about Washington it is not necessary to make mention. Some of them contain valuable material, but have a cynical tone, and appear to take delight in belittling him. This is a contemptible spirit, and is as unnecessary and unscholarly as it is unjust. We do not need to worship Washington, but he deserves our reverent regard.

Portraits, busts and statues of Washington, by artists of varying ability, some of them eminent, were made while he was living and after he was dead. His face and figure became familiar throughout America and the world. It is a good face, intelligent, strong, benevolent; a worthy figure, tall, straight, dignified,—a good figure and face for American youth to know and esteem highly. The man whose character showed through that face was a worthy and a great man. We are in no present danger of thinking too highly of him. He needs no praise beyond his due; but it were worthier in us to overpraise him than to treat him with flippant levity.

He loved his country and he was capable of loving every part of it. He was born in the South. but we do not think of him as a southerner. He spent his life in the East, but few men of his generation had so much faith in the West, or strove more earnestly and intelligently to bind East and West together by roads and canals. Railways, of

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course, he did not know about, but he would have been interested in them. There is something of close kinship in Washington's eagerness to see a great national highway from the coast to the interior, and Lincoln's great hope of seeing the completion of the Union Pacific railway. Indeed, there are many fine qualities which these two great men had in common.

Washington believed in education, and sought to secure a large American university. This country, as he believed, needed intelligent citizens, and well-trained leaders.

He believed in peace with all nations, and he sought to secure that peace by justice and honor. But he was a man of courage, and when national existence or integrity was at stake, he risked his life and his fortune for his country.

Lincoln was born in poverty and spent nearly all his life a poor boy and man. Washington was born in comfort and became a man of great wealth. Lincoln overcame the handicap of his poverty. Washington overcame the greater peril of wealth. The boys and girls of the last two generations have mostly been poor, and have found encouragement in Lincoln's rise above the hampering conditions that came with poverty. Wealth has increased and is still increasing. We need the encouragement of an example like that of Washington, strong and unselfish and industrious in spite of wealth.

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We have had a description of George Washington as he appeared in his early manhood. It will be interesting to read one that gives us an account of his appearance in his mature years. This was written in 1811 by Captain David Ackerman, of Alexandria, and he had in mind especially a view he had of Washington three days before he crossed the Delaware.

“Washington was not what ladies would call a pretty man, but in military costume a heroic figure, such as would impress the memory ever afterward. He had a large, thick nose, and it was very red that day, giving me the impression that he was not so moderate in the use of liquors as he was supposed to be. I found afterward that this was a peculiarity. His nose was apt to turn scarlet in a cold wind. He was standing near a small camp-fire, evidently lost in thought and making no effort to keep warm. He seemed six feet and a half in height, was as erect as an Indian, and did not for a moment relax from a military attitude. Washington’s exact height was six feet and two inches in his boots. He was then a little lame from striking his knee against a tree. His eye was so gray that it looked almost white, and he had a troubled look in his colorless face. He had a piece of woolen tied around his throat and was quite hoarse. Perhaps the throat trouble from which he finally died had its origin about then. Washington’s boots were enormous. They were number 13. His ordinary walking shoes were number 11. His hands were

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large in proportion and he could not buy a glove to fit him and had to have his gloves made to order. His mouth was his strong feature, the lips being always tightly compressed. That day they were compressed so tightly as to be painful to look at. At that time he weighed two hundred pounds, and there was no surplus flesh about him. He was tremendously muscled, and the fame of his great strength was everywhere. His large tent when wrapped up with the poles was so heavy that it required two men to place it in the camp wagon. Washington would lift it with one hand and throw it into the wagon as easily as if it were a pair of saddle-bags. He could hold a musket in one hand and shoot with precision as easily as other men did with a horse-pistol. His lungs were his weak point, and his voice was never strong. He was at that time in the prime of life. His hair was a chestnut brown, and his head was not large in contrast to every other part of his body, which seemed large and bony at all points. His finger-joints and wrists were so large as to be genuine curiosities. As to his habits at that period I found out much that might be interesting. He was an enormous eater, but was content with bread and meat if he had plenty of it. But hunger seemed to put him in a rage. It was his custom to take a drink of rum or whiskey on awakening in the morning. Of course all this was changed when he grew old. I saw him at Alexandria a year before he died. His hair was very gray and his form was slightly bent. His chest was very thin. He had false teeth, which did not fit and pushed his upper lip outward."

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While none of the detailed descriptions of Washington describe him as a man the details of whose appearance could be accounted marks of beauty, he was a man of striking physique, and had a certain symmetry that made him nothing less than handsome in his impressiveness.

Washington and Lincoln were nearly of a height. We do not know what Lincoln measured in his stockings, and he was proud to add the height of his boot-heels to what would have been a possible gymnasium stature. He called himself six feet and four inches in height, and probably in his stockings was a little over six feet and two inches. Concerning Washington we have no precise measurements and a somewhat widely varying series of statements. He probably was just about Lincoln's height. Lincoln at his heaviest weighed about one hundred eighty; Washington about two hundred. Washington was spare, and Lincoln always thin. Both had narrow chests. Neither had a large head in proportion to his body, and that of Washington, while about the size of the average head, seemed small because his body was so large. Both men carried their heads well, on finely poised necks. Washington had enormous feet and hands; Lincoln's feet were about the size of Washington's, but his hands were much smaller. Washington's largeness showed itself in the bulk of his bones and the prominence of his joints. Lincoln's joints

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were not unusually prominent, but his bones were very long in proportion to their bulk. Both men were powerful physically, and retained their strength into later years.

Each of these men, called to high and perilous responsibility in an hour of national peril, faced dangers, misunderstandings and misrepresentation. Each of them remained true to his convictions and unflinching loyal to his country. Each of them was loyal to conscience, sincere, religious, sympathetic, courageous, patriotic and public-spirited. America has reason to honor them, and will honor them both for ever. And the world increasingly honors them both and will continue so to do.

American education was certainly not established by Washington, nor is he the foremost example of it; but his was an early and emphatic influence in favor of the development of education in America itself, that should train our national leaders and enable every American citizen to think and act intelligently.

In all his many transactions with the government, as private citizen, as soldier and official, no act of Washington fell below the high standard of honor which was inherent in his character. His personal integrity and his public probity were of the highest quality.

The influence of Washington is still to be found in the traditions that belong to the presidential

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office. With modifications such as have come naturally through the years, the dignity and influence of the office of the president is what it is in no small part because Washington established its precedents and wisely thought out its customs.

The relations of the United States with other nations are very largely what they are because of the wisdom of Washington in his definition of the American attitude.

The United States after long struggles with sectionalism and divisive issues, have come to see more and more that Washington's vision of a great and completely united republic is America's true ideal.

It is interesting to realize the high esteem of George Washington in other lands than ours. In Great Britain he is honored almost as highly as he is in America. In Europe, and throughout the world, his name is known, and newer republics have found inspiration in his character and wisdom.

America has other and more recent heroes, and there will be more in generations to come. But he stands, and will ever stand, as a noble embodiment of all that in his generation was worthiest in American character. His honor is undimmed, and his name takes on added luster with the passing of the years. Few nations have such a name to stand at the head of their lists of national heroes. America and the world will ever venerate the name of George Washington, the father of his country.

CHRONOLOGY

CHRONOLOGY

- 1732, February 11/22. George Washington born on the plantation later called Wakefield, on the Potomac River, between Bridges Creek and Pope's Creek, Westmoreland County, Virginia.
- 1748, April 12. Death of Augustine, father of George Washington.
- 1748, Friday, March 11. Washington began his Journal of his journey over the mountains on his surveying expedition for Lord Fairfax, returning April 13.
- In the two years following, for which no journal is preserved, he extended this work of surveying.
- 1751, September 28, George Washington accompanied his brother Lawrence on a voyage to Barbadoes, arriving November 2. He sailed on the return voyage December 22, 1751, and arrived in Virginia, January 26, 1752.
- 1752, July 26. Lawrence Washington, brother of George, died, and George became heir of Mount Vernon.
- 1753, October 1. George Washington set forth to deliver Governor Dinwiddie's letter to the French commander returning from his one thousand-mile round trip through the wilderness January 16, 1754.
- 1754, February-August. Washington's first expedition against the French. Fight at Great Meadows, May 28. Surrender of Fort Necessity, July 4.
- 1755, February 19. General Edward Braddock arrived with British troops, and assumed command of an expedition against the French. His army was defeated and he was mortally wounded July 19.
- 1755, September 17. George Washington appointed by Governor Dinwiddie colonel of the Virginia regiment and commander-in-chief of the forces against the French.
- 1756, February 4. Washington started from Alexandria for Boston; he was in Philadelphia, February 8; in New York, February 15-18; in Boston, February 27 to March 5; in New York, March 10-14; in Philadelphia, March 14-19, and thence back to Virginia, and a little later to the front.

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- 1758, November 28. Letter of Colonel George Washington to Governor Francis Fauquier, informing him that the French had abandoned Fort Duquesne. End of the French and Indian War for Washington.
- 1758, George Washington elected to the House of Burgesses.
- 1759, January 6. George Washington married Martha Dandridge Custis, who was born in New Kent County June 2, 1731, daughter of Colonel John Dandridge. Her first husband, Daniel Parke Custis, had died leaving her with lands and a good estate.
- 1774, September 5. First Continental Congress.
- 1775, Washington at Mount Vernon.
- 1775, April 19. Lexington and Concord.
- 1775, May 10. Second Continental Congress.
- 1775, June 17. Battle of Bunker Hill.
- 1775, July 3. Washington took command of the Colonial Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts. He had been elected June 15, and started for Boston June 21.
- 1776, March 17. Boston evacuated by the British, and occupied by Washington.
- 1776, July 4. Declaration of Independence.
- 1776, July 5. Lord Howe arrived in New York, and a series of battles began in and about that city and in New Jersey.
- 1776, December 25. The battle of Trenton.
- 1777, January 3. Battle of Princeton.
- 1777, September 10, Battle of Germantown.
- 1778, June 28. Battle of Monmouth.
- 1781, October 19. Surrender of Cornwallis.
- 1783, April 19. Official ending of the Revolutionary War.
- 1783, December 23. Washington resigned from the army.
- 1784, August. Lafayette visited Mount Vernon.
- 1784, September 1. Washington set out on tour west of the mountains.
- 1787, May 13-September 17. Washington at Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.
- 1788, June 21. The Constitution of the United States became effective by the vote of the ninth state.
- 1789, April 30. In New York City, George Washington inaugurated President of the United States.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1787, March 4. Washington completed his second term as president, and having declined to be a candidate for a third term, participated in the inauguration of John Adams.
- 1789, August 25. Death at Fredericksburg, Virginia, of Mary Ball Washington, mother of George Washington.
- 1796, September. Washington's Farewell Address.
- 1797-1799, Washington at Mount Vernon.
- 1799, Saturday, December 14. George Washington died at Mount Vernon.
- 1799, December 18. Burial of George Washington at Mount Vernon.
- 1802, May 22. Death of Martha Washington, widow of President George Washington.

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